# Port Republic

## Being a Tale of the American Civil War

by Tetman Callis

Preface

*Port Republic* is a work of historical fiction, recounting the actions of fictional characters taking place within an historical context. Some of the central characters in this story—most notably protagonist Tom Rose, his brother Henry Rose, their cousin Becky Johnson, and Becky's mother, Sarah Johnson—are fictional, as are the words they speak and the actions they take. Most of the other characters who appear in this story—such as General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, Captain Samuel Moore, Lieutenant Sandie Pendelton, and Major Robert Dabney—are persons who really lived and who are reported in source documents as doing and saying many of the things they do and say in *Port Republic*. The demands and constraints of crafting a fictional narrative are such that some of the persons who were actually present at the battles of Cross Keys and Port Republic in June of 1862 do not appear in this work; likewise, some of the events were simplified, such as the number of assaults made on the Coaling. The dinner scene at Madison Hall on

the evening of the first day is the most notable construction involving historical figures who are portrayed as engaging in actions for which there is no basis in the historical record (though much of the information given in their conversation is based on verifiable accounts).

Most notable and valuable among the works read, reviewed, and consulted while doing the research for *Port Republic* were Robert K. Krick's *Conquering the Valley* (New York, William Morrow & Company, Inc., 1996) and Robert G. Tanner's *Stonewall in the Valley* (Mechanicsburg, PA, Stackpole Books, 1996). Other works consulted for a fuller understanding of the times and peoples providing the context for this work were the following: George Cary Eggleston, *A Rebel's Recollections* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1959); Bell Irvin Wiley, *The Life of Johnny Reb* (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1971); Henry Kyd Douglas, *I Rode With Stonewall* (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1940); John S. Jackman (ed. William C. Davis), *Diary of a Confederate Soldier* (Columbia, SC, University of South Carolina Press, 1990); Jedediah Hotchkiss (ed. Archie P. McDonald), *Make Me a Map of the Valley* (Dallas, Southern Methodist University Press, 1973); William Thomas Poague (ed. Monroe F. Cockrell), *Gunner with Stonewall* (Jackson, TN, McCowat-Mercer Press, 1957); US War Dept., *The War of the Rebellion (Official Record)*, Vol. XII, Ch. XXIV, Part 1, pp. 518-818, and Part 3,

pp. 827-915 (Washington, Govt. Print. Off., 1880-1901); Joseph Stanley Pennell, *The History of Rome Hanks and Kindred Matters* (Sag Harbor, Second Chance Press, 1982); James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1988); Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs* (New York, The Modern Library, 1999); Brian Steel Wills, *A Battle from the Start* (New York, HarperCollins, 1992); Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative* (Alexandria, VA, Time-Life Books, 1998); Stephen W. Sears, *To the Gates of Richmond* (New York, Ticknor & Fields, 1992); John J. Hennessy, *Return to Bull Run* (New York, Simon & Schuster, 1993); Wilbur Fisk (eds. Emil and Ruth Rosenblatt), *Hard Marching Every Day* (Lawrence, KS, University Press of Kansas, 1992); Michael Shaara, *The Killer Angels* (New York, Ballantine Books, 1974); Gordon C. Rhea, *The Battle of the Wilderness* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 1994); William D. Matter, *If It Takes All Summer* (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 1988); Brian C. Pohanka (ed. Constance Sullivan), *Landscapes of the Civil War* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1995); William J. Miller & Brian C. Pohanka, *An Illustrated History of the Civil War* (Alexandria, VA, Time-Life Books, 2000); *Atlas for the American Civil War* (ed. Thomas E. Griess, Wayne, NJ, Avery Publishing Group Inc., 1986); Abraham Lincoln (ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher), *Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings, 1859-1865* (New York, The Library of America, 1989);

William Tecumseh Sherman, *Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman* (New York, The Library of America, 1990); *Political Debates Between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas* (New York, Bartleby.com, 2000); and *Genealogy of the Kemper Family in the United States*, compiled and edited by Willis Miller Kemper and Harry Linn Wright, (Chicago, Geo. K. Hazlitt & Co., 1899).

Any deviations from the factual record in *Port Republic*, either accidental or intentional, are of course my own responsibility.

– Tetman Callis

# Chapter 1

Port Republic was a small town about a mile long and a third of a mile wide. It had a hotel and a little church and neat homes and small shops. Along its northern and eastern boundaries were the North River and the South River. They joined at the northeastern corner of town to become the South Fork of the Shenandoah, which continued away to the northeast through a flat, narrow valley with the Blue Ridge to the east and the Massanutten to the west. The South River could be crossed by two fords, the Upper and the Lower. A covered wooden bridge at the northwest corner of town spanned the North River. Just beyond the covered bridge was a low bluff. A road ran up from the bridge and over the bluff north to Cross Keys, a tavern near the foot of the Massanutten. A road from the fords headed east to cross the Blue Ridge at Brown's Gap.

The day was a clear and sunny Sunday in early June of 1862, the air cool and still. The time was not long after sunrise. A few soldiers were on

guard duty at the two fords and at the bridge, and a few were at the hotel, tending to the wounded from recent battles. Later that day the wounded would be transported by wagon and ambulance to hospitals further south at Staunton and Lexington. Other soldiers were camped in tents pitched in the great yard around Madison Hall, a large and nicely-kept two-story brick house at the southern edge of town. The town's main street ran up from the covered bridge and dog-legged past Madison Hall along a fence. Just beyond the house, where the street turned into the road to Staunton, were parked the wagons of a large supply train captured from the Union army. Near this train were the men and horses and caissons and brass Napoleons of an artillery battery.

Tom Rose rode his horse along the road from Staunton past the battery and the wagon train. He sat his horse well and carried himself with aristocratic confidence. He was sixteen years old. His uniform was that of a Confederate private, new and finely-cut and dusty from travel.

He rode up to the broad front porch of Madison Hall. A bored sentry whose pants were torn and jacket frayed, and who looked more like a farmer with a rifle than he did a soldier, stood by the door to the house. Tom dismounted and tied his horse's reins to the porch's rail and climbed the wooden steps up to the porch in a series of smooth, eager motions.

"Private Tom Rose, reporting!" Tom saluted the sentry.

"You salute in there," the sentry nodded at the door.

Tom entered a well-furnished drawing room that was in some disarray. Two young lieutenants were there. One was blonde and sat at a desk with some papers in front of him. His expression was that of someone who was either about to tell you to go to hell or volunteer to go there for you on scout. The other was dark-haired and squint-eyed and stood near the window. His expression was of someone harboring a private joke. Tom approached the lieutenant at the desk and saluted.

"Private Tom Rose, aide-de-camp to General Stonewall Jackson, reporting, sir!"

The lieutenant gave Tom an appraising look and returned his salute.

"At ease, Private Tom Rose. You get too sharp, you'll cut yourself."

Tom stood awkwardly and didn't know what to say. The other lieutenant had been watching with an amused expression. He crossed the room and extended his hand and shook hands with Tom.

"Tom Rose! Welcome to the Army of the Valley. We've been expecting you, though I can't say we were expecting you quite this early on a Sunday morning. I'm Henry Douglas, though you can call me Kyd. This here's Sandie Pendelton."

Lieutenant Pendelton stood and reached across the desk and shook Tom's hand. "Pleased to meet you. You're Henry Rose's brother, aren't you?"

"Yes, sir. You know my brother?"

"I sure do. We were at school together a while."

"Now we're all soldier-boys with Old Jack," Douglas said and scratched absently behind his ear.

"Old Jack?"

"General Thomas J. Jackson. You do know whose army you're joining, don't you?"

"Yes, sir! Stonewall Jackson's!"

Pendleton sat back down. "We call him Old Jack. It's the newspapers call him Stonewall."

"And when we're talking to him," Douglas said as he returned to his place near the window, "we call him General or Sir. We expect he'll be down shortly."

Pendelton shuffled through the papers on his desk. "We'll need to get you squared away, Private Tom Rose. To start with, you may think of yourself however it pleases you, but don't be calling yourself an aide-de-camp where Old Jack can hear you. You are a staff orderly."

"A lowly, yet important species of farm animal," Douglas said.

"When you're on duty—," Pendelton began, still shuffling through his papers.

"Which is pretty much twenty-four hours a day, each and every day," Douglas quickly put in.

"—when you're on duty and someone calls for an orderly, they'll be talking mostly to you. You'll be delivering messages. It's important work. Sometimes it's dangerous."

Tom stood up straighter. "I'm ready for any duty, Lieutenant."

"I've no doubt you are. Beings as it's the Sabbath, and the Yankees are up the river a ways yet, we'll be attending services with the General by and by. After that there will be inspections and such. It'll be a quiet day, if the Yankees leave us alone."

"And they don't seem to be in any great hurry to tangle with us again," Douglas looked out the window as though he might see an army of reluctant Unionists in the distance.

"Kyd, Tom's brother is on duty this morning with Captain Moore's company over at the Upper Ford, isn't he?"

"I do believe he is."

"Tom, why don't you ride on over to the Upper Ford—it's not far from here, just past the fence and the other side of Carrington's battery—and say hello to your brother. Have you had your breakfast yet?"

"No, sir." Tom in fact was hungry and had been hoping to get breakfast at headquarters, though he had the good manners not to say so.

"Well, they might be eating about now, and you can join them. Report back here after a while. Don't stay gone too long."

"And keep an eye on the house here," Douglas said. "You'll be able to see it from the ford. If you see a passel of officers come out, that's us and the General, so come back right away."

Tom rode to the Upper Ford, other side of the artillery battery he had passed on his way earlier to Madison Hall. A small company of two dozen men posted to guard the ford lounged about their camp. Some were cooking breakfast in skillets over camp fires and others were eating. One was writing a letter and one was reading from a small copy of the New Testament. Tom saw his brother, a tall lieutenant in his early twenties, talking with several of the soldiers.

"Henry!" Tom dismounted and Henry turned to see him.

"Tom! I got your letter. Got one from Mother, too, telling me you were coming."

The brothers embraced.

"Good to see you! How was your ride up?"

"It was fine, fine. Good to be here."

"Did you report in?"

"I sure did. Lieutenant Pendelton told me you were here. Said I might be able to scare up some breakfast."

"Did he? That rascal. Pickings must be slim at headquarters. Here, let me introduce you to the fellows, and we'll see what we can do for you."

The soldiers of the company were a motley group, all of them but their captain in their teens and twenties, all of them having just the day before completed two weeks of hard marching interspersed with fighting. Their various uniforms were dirty, sometimes ragged, occasionally stained with rust-colored splotches from blood. They exchanged handshakes and pleasantries with Tom.

"—and this is Captain Moore," Henry was saying. "Captain, this here's my brother, Tom Rose."

"Private Tom Rose," Tom extended his hand before remembering his military protocol and saluting instead. Captain Samuel Moore, a man with a goatee and a steady gaze and who was in his mid-thirties and had been a lawyer before the war, returned Tom's salute and then shook Tom's hand.

"The pleasure is all mine. Henry's told me a great deal about you. Said you've put aside your studies to come give Old Jack a hand."

"Yes, sir. I mean, I'm here to help however I can. Doctor McGuire put in a good word for me and said he thought I might be useful round about headquarters."

"And I talked with Sandie about him," Henry said to Captain Moore. "Sandie said they'd be glad to have an intelligent, serious-minded young man to help out with this and that." Henry turned to Tom. "But if they couldn't get one of those he said they'd settle for you."

Tom smirked at Henry. "Thank you most kindly, dear brother. I see the war hasn't changed you one bit. Except you've gotten thinner."

"You will, too, little brother." Henry turned and poked around among some foodstuffs near a campfire. "We're fresh out of oysters and champagne, and we ate up all the cakes and the roasted goose . . . looks like you'll have to settle for coosh."

"Coosh?"

"Coosh. Billy, whip together some coosh for my brother here. Show him how it's done."

"Yes, sir, Lieutenant."

The soldier called Billy got up from where he had been sitting near the fire, grabbed a skillet and a knife, and set about the task.

"Coosh?"

"Coosh," Billy said matter-of-factly. "Fine staple of Confederate soldiery. You take a little fatback, cook it up to get the grease out, mix some cornmeal with water to make a batter, then toss the batter into the pan. When the batter hits the hot grease—coosh! You cook it up a few minutes and then you eat it with the fatback. Here, I'll show you."

Tom only half paid attention while Billy prepared the coosh. Billy listened in while Tom talked with Henry.

"So, Henry, tell me how it is with you. We get your letters, but sometimes they take a week or more to arrive, even though we're not that far from home."

Billy, cooking up the fatback, said, "Not far enough, eh, Lieutenant? I'd rather fight the damn Federals in Pennsylvania."

"We'd leave them alone, Billy, if they'd only stay in Pennsylvania instead of coming down here to try and tell us how to live." Henry looked off toward Port Republic and the heights just beyond the town. "But here they are and here we are fighting them."

"Tell me what's happened," Tom said to Henry. "The newspapers are filled with the wildest stories of the exploits of Stonewall Jackson and his foot cavalry. They'd-a had us believe you all were in Chicago by now."

"I believe if Old Jack thought we should be in Chicago, we'd be there. He's run us all the way up to Harper's Ferry and back and had us fight two battles and several skirmishes in just the past two weeks."

Billy mixed up the batter in a tin plate while the fatback fried. He said, more to the plate than to anyone, "Been a lot of miles of hard road. And it rained! Let me tell you! Marching at night, in the rain. And in the day, in the rain. And never enough to eat, except when we first caught up with the Yankee supply wagons outside Winchester and had to eat up all the food that wouldn't keep. I got so sick . . . ."

Billy scooted the fatback to one side of the skillet and spooned in the batter. The batter made a sound as it hit the hot grease.

"Coosh," Tom smiled at the sound and said to Henry, "So what's the situation now? Lieutenant Pendelton says he doesn't think there will be any fighting today."

"There's a Federal division up the valley a ways, commanded by some politician, I think his name is Shields. Our cavalry is screening him."

"I hope they'll do more than a half-assed job of it," Billy said and he stirred the batter around in the skillet. "General Ashby got killed a couple days ago and everybody knows his cavalry won't do nothing without him around."

"Ashby's dead?" Tom said, his eyes widening.

"Yes," Henry said. "Killed in a skirmish night before last. But I wouldn't worry about his cavalry any, Billy. I expect Old Jack will look to it and we'll look to what we are to do." Henry extended an arm and pointed off beyond the town, and said to Tom, "Frémont's army of German mercenaries is in front of Baldy Ewell and his division, across the river a few miles past that ridge towards Cross Keys. They'll probably push on him a bit. If there's going to be any fighting today, it'll be up there."

"That's up near Aunt Sarah's place," Tom frowned and looked as though he were ready to jump on his horse and gallop to her rescue. "Any news of her and Becky?"

"Yes. They're at Madison Hall. I'm surprised you didn't see them there."

"Oh, I did not. I was there only a few minutes. I'm sure I will see them later. Are they all right?"

"Mad as hornets at the Dutchies. I'll let Becky tell you all about it. Say, it looks like your breakfast is about ready."

Billy spooned Tom's coosh out of the skillet and onto a tin plate and handed Tom the plate and a knife. "There you go, Tom. Begging your pardon, but we have no forks, and only the one spoon. However, we do have ourselves plenty of knives."

Tom took the plate and knife. The coosh and fatback were hot and steamed in the cool morning air.

"Thank you, Billy. This is fine. I've been wanting to live like a soldier."

"Innocent youth, welcome to the Valley Army," Billy grinned. "You, sir, shall certainly have plenty of opportunities to live like a soldier. How do you feel about sleeping in muddy fields during driving rainstorms?"

Before he answered or took his first bite, Tom glanced toward Madison Hall. He saw a small group of officers and orderlies gathering on the front porch.

"Oh, darn it," he handed his plate and knife to Henry, "I have to go."

"The missed meal," Billy said, his eyes fixed on Tom's plate, "an important early opportunity to live like a soldier." Henry handed Billy the plate and knife. Billy took them and said, "Thank you, Lieutenant!" and started eating.

Tom mounted his horse and saluted Captain Moore. “Captain, thank you for your generous hospitality. I regret I cannot linger.”

The captain returned his salute. “You are welcome here in Company I, Second Virginia Volunteers, any time, Private.”

Tom reached down and took his brother’s hand. “Henry, take care of yourself and I will see you again soon, Lord willing.”

“And you take care of your own self, Young Mister Staff Orderly,” Henry took Tom’s hand in both his own. “Give my regards to Becky and Aunt Sarah if you should see them. Drop by our camp this evening if you have the chance.”

“I will.” Tom saluted his brother and turned his horse to trot across the field to Madison Hall.

Major General Thomas J. Jackson stood on the porch of Madison Hall, fastening on his swordbelt. He was the same age as Captain Moore, of average height and build, and somewhat thin as were all the soldiers of his army. His beard was full but trim, his expression and manner often distant, his eyes an ice blue of such intensity when he was angry or in battle that his soldiers referred to him as “Old Blue Light.” He was an earnest, God-fearing man, a West Point graduate and Mexican War veteran who had been a teacher at the Virginia Military Institute before the war. He was strict with

his soldiers and rarely laughed, though he would smile if the mood struck him.

Around him on the porch were members of his staff, including Sandie Pendelton, Kyd Douglas, and Major Robert Dabney, Jackson's chief of staff and chaplain. A dour man, Dabney was not liked by the younger members of the staff. Pendelton thought him useless and Douglas thought him a pompous ass.

General Jackson stepped off the porch into the yard and his staff followed.

"General," Major Dabney said, "will there be military operations today?"

"No, you know I always try to keep the Sabbath, if the enemy will let me. I want you to preach this morning, in the Stonewall Brigade. I wish to attend myself."

"Very well, General. I shall prepare a sermon." Dabney turned to go to his tent pitched in the yard.

"We're going to ride over to see General Ewell before the services," Jackson said. He called to his black servant, "Jim! Saddle my horse, sir, if you would."

"Yes, sir," Jim said, and went to fetch Jackson's horse. The members of the staff began collecting their own horses. It was still early in the morning, and still quiet. Tom came trotting up on his horse and saluted Lieutenant Pendelton.

"Private Rose reporting, sir!"

Pendelton returned his salute and Jackson said, "Lieutenant, who is this young soldier?"

"General, this is your new orderly, the fellow Doctor McGuire was telling you of—Pastor Rose's son, Thomas."

"I see," Jackson said, glancing at Tom. "Where is Doctor McGuire?"

"He's gone into town," Douglas said, "to supervise the loading of the wounded onto ambulances."

A rider galloped their way across the field, from the direction of the town, and pulled up sharply in front of them.

"Sir!" he threw a salute, not at anyone in particular. "Yankees are just the other side of the Lower Ford! Infantry, cavalry, and artillery!"

"Who's guarding that ford?" Jackson said to his staff as he pulled on his gauntlets.

Pendelton started to answer, "Sir, that's assigned to Captain—"

”There ain’t nobody down there now, sir!” the rider said to General Jackson. “The Yanks is about to come across!”

“Well, go back and fight them,” Jackson calmly said.

“Yes, sir!” the rider said and turned his horse and galloped back to town.

“Sandie,” Jackson continued calmly, “send a dispatch to General Ewell, informing him of the situation. Tell him we’re going down to take a look.”

“Yes, sir. Hutchins!” Pendelton called. An orderly came to him and waited while he leaned against his saddle and hurriedly wrote a message. The other officers and men continued readying their horses. Jackson’s servant Jim brought the general’s saddled-up horse from across the yard. Hutchins took the message from Pendelton and got on his horse and galloped into town to cross the covered bridge over the North River.

The sudden and sharp boom of artillery fire came from beyond town, followed by the sound of at artillery shells exploding. General Jackson mounted his horse, the small and reliable Little Sorrel, his favorite.

“Sandie, the Stonewall Brigade is across the bridge, just the other side of that bluff, is it not?”

“Yes, sir, it is,” Pendelton said, and he and the others mounted their horses.

"Gentlemen, let us go there quickly!" Jackson ordered, and to his servant said, "Jim! Strike the camp! Have it sent to the rear within five minutes!"

Jackson spurred his horse and galloped across the yard. Before following him, Pendelton quickly said, "Private Rose! Ride over to Captain Moore's company and let them know what's going on! Then join us across the bridge!"

"Yes, sir!" Tom turned his horse and galloped back across the field to the Upper Ford. The soldiers there had heard the cannonading, as anyone in the vicinity who was not deaf could have done, and had begun preparing for whatever it might mean. Tom was shouting as he rode up, "Henry! Henry! Come quick!"

"What is it, Tom?" Henry was worried a moment that his brother may have been wounded.

"The Yankees are attacking!" Tom reined up his horse. "Captain Moore!"

"What is it, Private?"

"Sir, Lieutenant Pendelton wishes me to inform you that the Yankees are attacking! He and the General and the others are riding to cross the bridge!"

"Thank you, Private! Please inform the lieutenant that we shall defend the wagons."

"Yes, sir!" Tom turned his horse and galloped off.

Henry said, "Tom! Wait!" but it was too late, Tom was already gone. Henry quietly said, "Be careful," and returned to getting the company ready for action.

Teamsters and their mules and wagons were gathered out front of the hotel to take on the wounded for transport. They began to panic when a shell slammed into the hotel's roof and exploded, sending down a shower of splinters and shingles. Dr. Hunter McGuire, the young doctor who was the Valley Army's chief surgeon, sat astride his horse and waved a pistol at the teamsters.

"God damn you sorry sons of bitches! The first one of you who tries to leave before his ambulance is loaded, I'll shoot the bastard myself!"

Jackson and his staff had galloped up and Jackson heard this and reined up behind McGuire.

"Doctor McGuire, I'm afraid you are a wicked man. Don't you think you can manage these men without swearing?"

The doctor turned to see his commanding general.

"I'm sorry, sir. I shall try."

The hotel was just up the street from the covered bridge. A few hundred feet to the east, Union cavalry followed by limbered cannon splashed across the Lower Ford. The Confederate officers saw the Federals heading for the bridge and spurred their horses to get there first, with the exception of McGuire, who remained with the ambulance wagons. Jackson and his staff made it across the covered bridge to safety, Douglas bringing up the rear and bullets buzzing and whistling around him. The officers continued up the low bluff across the river.

Women and children, singly and in small family groups, ran from the town to the shelter of the wooded hills to the west and south. Some were shouting or screaming or crying under the Union cannonade and the crack of gunshots. Some of the women and girls had their skirts hitched up in an unladylike fashion as they sprinted barefoot to safety.

Tom galloped into the town and its chaos. Near the hotel, among the scampering people, he saw his cousin Becky Johnson. He reined up sharply.

"Becky! Becky!"

She turned and saw him. "Thomas Rose! What are you doing here?"

"I would ask you the same question, but there's no time! You've got to get out of here! The Yankees have come!"

"But I'm going down to the hotel to help Doctor McGuire with the wounded."

"No, you are not!"

She didn't look as if she was going to obey him, so he said, "I will go! You get on out of here!"

A solid shot from a Union cannon came screaming overhead. Tom shouted at Becky, "Hitch up your skirts and run like the Devil was chasing you!"

She hesitated, then did as her cousin had said. He watched her racing toward the woods outside of town. As soon as she was out of sight, he turned and continued to the hotel, forgetting in the excitement that Lieutenant Pendelton had ordered him to rejoin Jackson's staff across the bridge. He saw Dr. McGuire supervising the loading of the last few ambulance wagons and rode up to join him.

"Doctor McGuire! My father sends his regards!"

"Thomas Rose! You're a welcome sight! You got here just in time. I need you—"

McGuire was cut short by the sudden appearance beside them of several mounted Union cavalrymen in their shoddy blue uniforms, their

pistols and carbines pointing at the Rebel doctor and the young orderly. A Union sergeant waved his cutlass over their heads.

"Hands up! You are surrendered men or you are dead men!"

On the far side of the bluff across the river from Port Republic, Jackson galloped along the road and hollered as loud as he could.

"Beat the long roll! Beat the long roll!"

The soldiers of the Stonewall Brigade were lining up for inspection when Jackson galloped up to a stop in front of their commander, General Charles Winder, who had just come out of his tent in his shirtsleeves. Cannonading could be heard from beyond the bluff and the sound of the long roll, first one drum and then others joining in, accompanied the sound of the gunfire.

"General Winder, the Yankees are in the town! March on them immediately at the double-quick and drive them out! Give them the bayonet!"

"Yes, sir!" Winder threw a salute while also quickly tucking in his shirttail. Jackson turned and continued his hollering gallop down the road.

"Have the guns hitched up! Have the guns hitched up!"

Major Dabney sat on a camp stool in front of a camp desk in his tent. He opened his Bible to begin work on his sermon. He paid no attention to the sound of the cannonading a mile away at the north edge of town. He laid a sheet of foolscap on the desk and took up his quill.

Suddenly the tent's pegs were being yanked out, revealing General Jackson's servant Jim Lewis doing the yanking. Dabney was startled and not a little angry.

"What's up, Lewis?"

"Why, don't you know? The Yankees done come. The General done gone across the river, fast as his horse's legs can carry him."

Dabney put down his quill, closed his Bible, stood and picked up a pistol and holstered it and pulled on his coat.

"Catch and saddle up my horse, then."

Lewis continued pulling down the tent. He didn't look at Dabney.

"No, sir, I don't reckon I'm going to be doing that. The General told me to have the tents and the baggage headed to the rear within five minutes and I intend to do that instead."

Dabney all but stamped his foot in pique.

"Oh, very well, then! I'll saddle my own horse!"

Lewis continued working.

“I reckon you might just do that, Major.”

The two-dozen men of Company I, Second Virginia Volunteers, stood assembled in two lines beside their camp at the Upper Ford. Captain Moore spoke with Lieutenant Rose.

“We’ll double-quick on over to the fence near Madison Hall and set up there. If the Yankees are going to capture the wagons, they’ll have to go right by us.”

“We’ll bushwhack them!”

“I plan for us to. Let’s move out.”

The Federal cannonading from across the Lower Ford continued. A few Confederate soldiers appeared along the crest of the low bluff across the North River and exchanged gunfire with the Union horsemen below, most of whom were forming up in the main street of the town and had no infantry with them. They were holding Tom and Dr. McGuire as mounted prisoners, unbound but with one close guard apiece. A mounted colonel trotted up to the Rebel prisoners.

“Is that a wagon train I see at the other end of town?”

Neither Tom nor Dr. McGuire answered. The colonel hadn't expected them to. He looked up the street at the wagon train almost a mile away, the white canvas tops of the wagons bright in the morning sun. He looked back at Tom and the doctor.

"That is indeed a wagon train. I bet that's a pretty important wagon train. We shall capture it. You gentlemen shall accompany us."

The colonel barked some orders and the Yankees moved out with their prisoners, riding at a walk up the street which gently sloped up from the river toward Madison Hall.

Captain Moore's company jogged across the field from the Upper Ford to the fence in front of Madison Hall. The bottom part of the fence was stone, with wooden planks atop. When Moore's men reached the fence, they quickly tore down some of the planking and took cover behind the low stone wall.

Major Dabney trotted his horse across the field near Madison Hall. He saw Captain James Carrington's two-gun battery there, its men panicking. Dabney spurred his horse toward them.

"Limber up! Limber up!" Carrington was shouting. He and his men had arrived at the war literally yesterday.

"For God's sake, Captain!" one gunner shouted. "Don't let us leave without firing a shot! If we do we will be captured!"

Some of the battery's men had already run off toward the wagons or the woods. Others, including a few of the battery's slaves, were harnessing the horses and hitching up the caissons and the guns. The drivers whipped the horses in a frenzy and the guns began moving off. Carrington joined them. He was a young captain, scarce twenty-four years old, and could hardly have been more frightened. He didn't see Dabney galloping at him until the major was reining up directly in front of him and shouting at him.

"Captain! General Jackson has been captured, I think, with his entire staff except myself! We must hold the line here! Protect the wagons!"

"And who the hell are you?" the captain all but screamed, feeling as though he was about to throw up or burst into sobs or both.

The major straightened in his saddle.

"Sir, I am Major Robert Dabney, aide to General Jackson! You will turn these guns around and take them into action now!"

Moore's men crouched behind the low stone wall. Their captain and their lieutenant stood behind them, swords drawn, slowly walking the line

back and forth. The riflemen were quietly anxious. A couple of them had expressions of particular and almost desperate fear.

"Crouch down low, men," Captain Moore said. "Crouch down low. When the Yankees ride up, you each one pick your man, but don't fire until the order is given."

Henry peered down the street and into town. He saw the Union horsemen begin to head their way.

"Here they come."

"Steady, boys," Captain Moore said. "Here they come. Hold your fire."

The Yankees forced Doctor McGuire and Tom Rose to ride in their front ranks. They all saw the fence up the lane in front of them. None of them saw what was waiting behind it.

Carrington and his battery and Major Dabney clattered and thudded up alongside Moore's company to take up a position to their right, behind a portion of the fence where the planks had not been torn down.

"Captain!" Dabney shouted. "We've come to assist you!"

"Thank you, sir!" Moore glanced at the battery. "We expect the Yankees will be by shortly. You might want to load up with canister right away."

Carrington gave his men orders and they began deploying their cannon. Those of his men who didn't know what to do stood around looking lost. A few slipped away when the others weren't looking.

"We'll need to tear down that fence!" Carrington said.

"There's no time, Captain!" Moore said. "Your men will just have to fire through it!"

"Right!" Dabney said, thinking to make himself useful. "This is a game of bluff, Captain! If the Yankees see how small our force is, they'll ride right over us!"

Dabney, still on horseback, said this loudly enough for the soldiers around him to hear. Several glanced his way and looked as though they might be about to run for it. Moore glared at Dabney and thought that in a slightly different situation he might shoot that man. He looked back across the fence and saw the Union cavalry come trotting up the lane. He didn't see that McGuire and Tom were in with them.

"Hold your fire!" he said low and fiercely to his men. "Hold your fire! Hold your fire!"

The Yankees reached the dog-leg in front of Madison Hall and began their turn along the road, still at a trot. There were about a hundred of them

bunched together in the lane, with Tom and the doctor in their van. Henry saw them.

"That is my brother—"

"Fire!" Captain Moore yelled. Two dozen rifled muskets, five or so officer's revolvers, and two smoothbore cannon roared almost simultaneously. The volley hit the Yankees, bullets and case shot thudding into men and horses. Saddles emptied and horses whirled and reared and danced in fear and pain. There were shouts, and men and horses both were screaming. McGuire's guard was among the men hit and knocked from his horse.

"Tom! Let's get out of here!"

Tom dodged his guard and he and McGuire broke away in the confusion. They galloped down a side street to escape. A few shots were fired after them but none hit.

Henry peered from behind the fence through the smoke from the gunfire. He seemed to hear nothing but his own muttering, "My God, I've killed my brother, I've killed my brother . . . ," then caught a glimpse of Tom and Doctor McGuire making their escape. He heard Captain Moore shouting.

"Cease fire! Cease fire!" Then the captain was beside him. "Lieutenant, you said your brother was with them?"

"Yes, Captain. It appeared the Federals had taken him and Hunter McGuire prisoner, but I saw them escape in the melee. I saw them."

"Let us hope they are unhurt, Lieutenant. And let us tend to our line. The enemy may return."

General Jackson rode his horse at a trot at the head of Poague's battery. Captain William Poague, an old friend of Jackson's, rode alongside the General, with the battery's six cannon following behind them. They reached the edge of the bluff overlooking the North River and Port Republic and they stopped. Below them in the town Union horsemen were fighting a whirling, confusing skirmish with a handful of Confederate foot-soldiers. Union cannon continued shelling the town from positions beyond the Lower Ford. Another cannon was being deployed at the far end of the covered bridge. Jackson pointed to a nearby level space along the edge of the bluff.

"Captain, set up your pieces there and commence firing."

Jackson left Captain Poague to his battery and rode the short distance to where the road from the covered bridge topped the bluff. The cannon at the other end of the bridge was pointed in his direction. White clouds of black powder smoke obscured the view and made it difficult to tell if it was a Union gun or a Confederate gun. Pendelton joined Jackson.

“Sandie, I cannot tell if that is one of our cannon. Are those Union uniforms the gunners are wearing?”

“General, I am not sure. That new battery, Carrington’s battery, may be wearing blue jackets.”

Jackson rose in his stirrups and hollered across the river.

“Bring that gun over here! Bring that gun over here!”

The cannon was pointing at him and the General and its crew was loading it.

“General, I do believe that may be a Union gun!”

Jackson and Pendelton turned their horses away. The gun fired and the dirt behind the Confederate officers erupted from the impact of a canister round.

Captain Moore and Lieutenant Rose and the men of Company I remained in position behind the low stone wall. To their right, the men of Carrington’s battery had torn down those parts of the plank fence that were not blown down by their first volley.

“Load ‘em up, boys,” Captain Moore said. “Looks like they’re going to try us again.”

The Union cavalry colonel reformed his detachment. He raised his sword over his head and brought it down sharply.

"Charge!"

The Yankees charged up the lane. They were again met with a volley from the Rebel guns. Again men and horses were hit and fell. Again those who were able retreated back down the lane.

Driven back from the edge of the bluff by the Union cannon fire, Jackson met General Winder trotting up on horseback, sword in hand at the head of his column of jogging infantry. Winder's men had bayonets affixed to their rifles. Jackson wheeled his horse to trot alongside them and their commander.

"Attack at once, General!"

"Yes, sir!" Winder raised his sword. "Brigade, forward! Route step, march! Charge!"

Jackson waved his hat over his head and shouted, "Charge the bridge! Charge the bridge! Charge the bridge!"

The Confederate infantry followed Winder over the bluff and down the slope. They broke into the peculiar high, keening sound of their war-cry as they charged. At the other end of the covered bridge the Union gunners

manning the one cannon there saw the hundreds of screaming Rebels charging at them. Most of the gunners broke and ran, with only three remaining at the gun. Those three sighted it down the covered bridge. The Rebels, led by Winder on horseback, thundered onto the wooden planking. The Yankees fired. The cannon was poorly aimed and its shell exploded into the side of the bridge just ahead of the Rebels, who were barely slowed by the shot. The three Union gunners ran for their lives. The still-screaming Confederates charged across the bridge and poured into the town. They shot or bayoneted any Union soldiers who didn't surrender or escape. At the south end of town, the Union cavalry who had survived the two failed attacks on Moore's company and Carrington's battery heard and saw what was happening behind them and broke up and galloped out of town as fast as they could, most reaching safety over the Upper Ford.

Tom Rose and Doctor McGuire walked their horses down a Port Republic side street. They escorted a clutch of a dozen Union prisoners. The doctor carried a large horse pistol while Tom carried a musket.

"Doctor McGuire, this is one of those fine Belgian rifled muskets I've heard about. I heard the Yankees have bought up near every Belgian rifled musket they could lay their hands on."

McGuire barely glanced at Tom and paid attention to the prisoners.

"Thomas, I wouldn't be surprised. They don't ever seem to run out of muskets. Nor cartridges to fire. For our part, last fall when General Jackson took command, we were so short of muskets that he sent a requisition to Richmond for six thousand pikes. The Confederacy didn't happen to have pikes available in any number, so we had to do without those items completely."

Tom laughed and looked at the prisoners.

"I wouldn't mind spearing me a few bluebellies, Doctor, if a pike was all I had."

"Well, staff orderlies don't generally do much spearing. Nor shooting. I expect you'll have to turn that pretty Belgian musket over to the Quartermaster soon enough."

General Jackson and his staff rode up the lane toward Madison Hall. Captain Moore marched his company down the lane into town and saluted the General, who returned his salute.

"Well done, Captain." Jackson turned to Pendelton, "Sandie, get the staff organized. We will ride over to visit with General Ewell, then return for Sunday services."

"Yes, sir!"

Jackson then turned to Dabney.

"Major, I wish you to remain here and complete your sermon. We will return presently."

Ewell's division was five miles north of Port Republic, holding high ground overlooking the road intersection at Cross Keys. Cannonading could be heard to the front as Jackson and his staff rode through the rear areas of Ewell's force. They passed the encampment of a particularly rough-looking group of soldiers, some of whom wore the red fezzes, short jackets, and striped baggy pants of the Zouaves. Tom rode alongside Lieutenant Douglas.

"Kyd, who are those men there?"

"That's Major Rob Wheat's battalion of Louisiana Tigers, part of General Taylor's brigade. Such a motley herd of humanity was probably never got together before, and may never be again."

"They do appear a trifle piratical."

"That's not surprising, given how many of them have been pirates."

Major Wheat, a big, good-natured and bluff fellow, was on horseback near where some of his troops were lining up. They were goofing around and not hurrying into line. Wheat drew his sword and stood in his stirrups.

"If you don't get to your places and behave as soldiers should," he bellowed, "then I shall cut your hands off with this sword!"

Wheat's men scrambled to their places. Tom and Kyd rode by.

"They're a pack of cowards and wharf rats," Kyd told Tom. "The low-down population of every human race known. A greater lot of thieves and cut-throats never trod this hemisphere. They're also the best-drilled men in the best-drilled brigade in the whole army."

"Not better drilled than the Stonewall Brigade, I should think."

"Oh, yes. They are. The Stonewall Brigade is still the General's favorite, since they've been with him from the beginning. But Dick Taylor has made a fine brigade out of his Louisiana boys. Their charge at Winchester a couple weeks ago was a thing of beauty. Perfectly formed lines marching right up the hill and over the Yankees, who hightailed it clear back to Harper's Ferry!"

Ahead of them Jackson and the others arrived at General Ewell's headquarters. McGuire and Pendelton were speaking with Jackson, who was smiling at something one of them had said.

"You know, General, I never liked the cavalry anyhow," McGuire said. Jackson laughed at this gleefully, like a child.

Major General Richard Ewell stepped out of his headquarters tent to greet his commander. He was a small man with a bald head as round as a

cannonball. He cocked it to one side to speak, his voice a high-pitched lisp. When General Jackson was not within earshot, Baldy Ewell could swear more profanely and profoundly than any other officer in the Valley Army.

"General!" he casually saluted Jackson, who returned his salute and dismounted and motioned to Pendelton to join him. Ewell led the two officers into his tent and to a camp table there. Maps and papers were laid out on the table. The sound of cannonading continued in the near distance.

"Gentleman," Ewell began, leaning over the largest of the maps and pointing at various features as he spoke. "Frémont's German mercenaries started pushing against us this morning. My Alabamians delayed them long enough here, at Union Church, for me to take my position at leisure along this line here. The general features are a valley with a rivulet in front, woods on both flanks, and a large field here where the road from Port Republic crosses the center of my line. My side of the valley is more defined and commanding than the Federals' side and I do believe I could hold out here against them indefinitely. It is one of the prettiest battlefields nature ever made."

Ewell gazed enraptured at the map.

"Go on, General," Jackson gently coaxed.

"Frémont felt along our front with skirmishers and shortly afterwards posted his artillery, chiefly opposite mine. As you can hear, the artillery duel

has commenced. His infantry is moving up now and we are prepared to meet it."

A long line of Confederate infantrymen waited in a brushy woods that was separated by a rail fence from a field of clover. Their officers gave them orders and the men took cover behind the fence, some of them prone and others kneeling. They aimed their rifles across the field, which sloped down into a shallow hollow and then back up into another thin belt of woods about two hundred yards away. The officers kept up a calming chatter.

"Easy, boys, easy, keep covered."

Gunfire could be heard coming from the woods across the field. A scattering of Confederate soldiers backed out of the woods and into the field, firing their muskets back into the woods they had just come from.

"Okay, boys," the officers along the fence said, "they're driving in our skirmishers. Steady, now. Steady!"

Union troops in perfect battle formation marched out of the woods and into the field of clover. The Confederate soldiers hidden along the fence across the field remarked at the sight.

"Well, I'll be damned, they ain't got no skirmishers."

"They'll walk right up to us. They're acting like they're on parade."

“Shee-it! We will teach them damn Dutchies a thing or two about fightin’ bushwackers!”

“Cap your pieces,” the Confederate officers ordered. Hundreds of quiet clicks sounded as the soldiers cocked their muskets.

The Union force moved fully out of the woods and into the field. They were about five hundred men arranged in two lines, one right behind the other, their officers out in front and shouting commands in German. They were impeccably drilled. Their colonel marched backwards in front of them, making sure they kept their alignment.

They marched down the slight slope into the shallow hollow, then back up again, keeping their perfect parade-ground formation and unaware that they were marching directly at a Confederate force that outnumbered them more than two-to-one. For some of those Confederates who were lying prone behind the fence, the Union troops looked almost as though they were rising out of the earth as they marched up out of the hollow. When they were about fifty yards from the fence at the edge of the brushy woods, a Confederate colonel leaped to his feet with his sword raised above his head.

“Fire!”

Some of the Confederates fired from their hidden positions while others rose to their feet and fired standing up. The volley slammed into the

Germans, taking out nearly the entire first line and part of the second, men screaming and shouting and falling. The Confederates reloaded as fast as they could and continued to fire. Those few Federals who were able turned and ran as fast as they could back to the thin line of woods they had marched out of shortly before.

"Cease fire!" shouted the Confederate officers. "Cease fire! Cease fire!"

The Confederate gunfire sputtered to an end. From the smoky battlefield came moans and groans and sobbings. As the smoke cleared the Confederates could see in front of them hundreds of dead and wounded Union soldiers sprawled in the clover, the wounded moving as they were able, if they were able, and the air filling with the sounds of cries, "Mein Gott . . . Mein Gott . . . Mutti, Ich sterbe, Mutti . . . bitte, Mutti, bitte . . . ."

Several hundred Confederate soldiers gathered for Sunday services in a large open area near Port Republic. Some stood and some sat. General Jackson sat on a large log, front-row center, his staff arrayed to either side. Major Dabney stood before the congregation and preached. Jackson paid close and careful attention, a calm and childlike expression on his face.

The town was crowded the rest of the day with Confederate troops engaged in every variety of military task short of marching, shooting, killing

and dying. Soldiers pitched tents, cleaned muskets, repaired clothing, hauled supplies, tended to horses and mules, cooked meals over campfires, wrote letters, read Bibles and newspapers and the odd copy of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* or Plutarch's *Lives*, told stories, and speculated on what might be to come.

## Chapter 2

At dusk a young and frightened soldier approached the encampment of Captain Moore's company. He saw the captain and Lieutenant Rose sitting near a campfire and went to them, where he stopped, snapped as sharply to attention as a young draftee plowboy could do, and saluted.

"Captain Moore! Private Elijah Cornwall reporting!"

The Captain didn't return his salute. According to military etiquette, this meant that Cornwall had to remain at attention, his hand fixed to his forehead in salute.

"Mr. Cornwall," Captain Moore said, "I must say I am surprised to see you again. Lieutenant Rose, are you likewise surprised to see Mr. Cornwall?"

"Indeed I am, Captain. It's been my recent experience that when a conscript runs away, he stays runned away."

Cornwall remained almost frozen at attention, saluting.

“Please forgive me, sir!” he blurted. “Please forgive me! It was like all the sudden every part of me except my legs turned to water and I couldn’t control myself, they just carried me off!”

Captain Moore waited a moment before speaking. “Did they now? Tell me, what part of you was it carried you back? You don’t look much different from how you looked before the battle.” He turned to Henry. “Lieutenant, what part of Mister Cornwall was it carried him back, do you think?”

“I’d have to say several parts, Captain. His heart. His brains. His sense of honor. Several parts.”

“Sometimes it takes several parts together to overrule those legs, don’t you think, Mister Cornwall?” Moore returned Cornwall’s salute, “At ease, Private. Long as you don’t make it a habit to go scurrying off like a frightened rabbit every time a Yankee shoots at you, we need not mention this again.”

“Thank you, sir!” Cornwall dropped his salute and his face trembled into an uncertain smile, “Thank you!” He saluted again.

“You don’t need to salute now, Private,” Henry said.

“Report to your sergeant,” Moore told Cornwall. “Dismissed.”

Cornwall’s smile was now open and certain. “Yes, sir!” He turned to leave.

“Private!” Henry snapped. Cornwall stopped, his smile gone. “Now you need to salute.”

Confused, Cornwall saluted Henry.

“Not me,” Henry calmly said. “Salute the Captain.”

Cornwall saluted Moore, who returned his salute. Cornwall scurried off. Moore pulled out his pipe and a small pouch and began filling the bowl with tobacco.

“I think he shall make a fine soldier, Henry, once he grows accustomed to it.”

“Most of them do, Samuel. They often turn out well, no matter how scared they may be at the start.”

Moore held a long twig against the campfire’s coals and once its tip was glowing red he lit his pipe with it.

“Don’t you think you should get yourself over to Madison Hall?” he said. “It’s not every evening you are invited to dine there. You don’t want to keep your hosts waiting.”

“Of course not, Captain. Are you certain it’s all right?

“Everything will be fine here. Now, you go,” Captain Moore waved his pipe in the direction of Madison Hall.

The dining room at Madison Hall was spacious and well-furnished. At the head of its large and heavy oak table sat Madison Hall's proprietor, Dr. George Whitfield Kemper, Sr. He was in his mid-seventies and four years now a widower. Joining him at table were Lieutenants Sandie Pendelton, Kyd Douglas, and Henry Rose, and Private Tom Rose, and the Rose brothers' Aunt Sarah Johnson and her daughter, Becky. Two liveried black household servants stood discreetly in attendance. They would scarcely be noticed during the evening by the white diners who were accustomed from birth to being waited on unquestioningly by their slaves. The appetizer of fried mushrooms and onions and a creamed spinach soup had already been served. Soon the slaves would be bringing in the salad course.

"Doctor Kemper," Henry said, "Madison Hall is certainly a fine estate."

"Thank you kindly, Lieutenant Rose. I enjoy having visitors and guests. With General Jackson and his army here, I have been having a grand old time. Tilly sure would have loved the to-do. She loved little get-togethers over a cozy dinner such as this, though she would have thought it a shame the General could not be here tonight."

"General Jackson sends his regards, Doctor," Sandie said. "He regrets that he must remain this evening in town and forego the charms of Madison Hall."

"Doctor," Henry said, "might I inquire as to how Madison Hall came by its name?"

"Certainly, sir. Madison Hall was built about sixty-five years ago by John Madison, cousin to our country's fourth president, James Madison."

"Not our country anymore," Sandie said. "Ours is down here—The South."

"Well," the doctor said, "maybe we could all be one country again someday, if our Northern brothers would stop this nonsense of trying to force us to do what they think we ought to, instead of letting us decide for ourselves."

"I doubt that day will ever come."

"Didn't seem to come today," Tom said. "Henry, you said today's fighting would be miles away. I had it within a foot of myself!"

"Welcome to the adventure, little brother. When I saw you with the Union cavalry, that gave me quite a start. I thought for a moment you may have changed sides, then feared we may have shot you."

"You can imagine my relief that you did not."

"Mine as well," Becky said. Tom sat next to her and she placed a hand lightly on his arm. Henry sat across from her and she said to him, "I even

found I could forgive him for not coming to see about me after the battle, once I learned he'd escaped from capture."

"Those Yankees do have a way of distracting a body," Tom said, but Becky was not paying attention to him. It was Henry she was fixed upon.

"Henry, how did those Yankees get into town?"

"On horseback, Becky, of course," Henry teased, then turned to Sandie and Kyd. "Gentlemen, what happened this morning to our cavalry screen?"

"Seems to have evaporated sometime during the night," Kyd said, "though the nights have been cool and damp."

"With General Ashby gone, his cavalry brigade has fallen apart," Sandie said. "He had only a few companies that were reliable even when he was alive,"

"Thank God we still have a couple regiments of Munford's cavalry," Kyd said. "They're picketing up the Valley tonight. Shields' division will not get past them!"

"We may thank God for many blessings, Mister Douglas," Aunt Sarah said. She sat opposite Doctor Kemper, in the place his wife, the late Matilda Graham Kemper, had once occupied. Becky sat to her left and Henry to her right.

"Yes, ma'am, we certainly may," Kyd said, not unaware of her gentle rebuke. "Most immediately we have him to thank for this bountiful table and most agreeable companionship." He raised his wine glass in toast and Henry followed suit with "Hear, hear," and Becky with "We are truly blessed."

"We are indeed blessed this evening by His divine mercy," Henry said as the servants quietly moved around the table, refilling the wine glasses and bringing in the entrée of braised South Fork eel.

"And by His divine guidance in sending us a general as brilliant as General Jackson," Becky said to Henry, "and soldiers as valiant as Captain Moore and yourself." As soon as she said this she thought she may have said too much and she blushed.

"Hey!" Tom said. "What about my own valiant self? Not to be immodest, but Doctor McGuire and I bagged seven bluebellies this morning! Caught 'em with their own hooks!" Dr. Kemper and Aunt Sarah smiled at Tom's exuberance and the others laughed.

"Lieutenant Pendelton," Aunt Sarah said, "it is sometimes so difficult for we civilians to understand just what it is you soldiers are up to, running all about the country, when it seems the newspapers publish any old rumor they stub their toes on."

"To tell you the truth, Missus Johnson, sometimes all we have to go on ourselves are rumors. I spend most of my waking hours with Old Jack and I can tell you, he plays his cards pretty close to his vest. But I have complete faith that he always knows what he is going to do, as I likewise have complete faith that he is not one to ask anyone's opinion about it beforehand."

"There's also the nature of the Valley's terrain to take into account, Missus Johnson," Kyd said. "What with the mountains, the gaps, the rivers, the bridges, and the roads, operations are carried on here that Caesar or Napoleon never dreamed of."

"It seems as though General Jackson is more adept at such operations than all of his opponents put together," Dr. Kemper said. "That was some fine business he had you all doing with the Union army up by Front Royal and Winchester. I hear you knocked those bluebellies all the way back to Harper's Ferry and bagged a great many wagons full of their supplies."

Kyd leaned forward and spread his hands out beside himself.

"An incredible bounty, Doctor. I expect Sandie knows more of the details than do I."

"I expect I do, seeing's how I reviewed all the reports before forwarding them to Richmond." Sandie was in his element now. "We seized a warehouse full of Union supplies at Winchester, in addition to the wagon

train we captured on the road from there down to Front Royal. We got some of everything we needed, some things more than others. We captured a goodly store of medical supplies, which Doctor McGuire right away disbursed amongst the various regimental surgeons and the hospitals. We never do have enough medical supplies. We also captured two fully furnished field hospitals which we left intact for the use of sick and wounded Yankees and for our own wounded who were too badly injured to be moved."

"I saw General Ewell going about amongst those we had to leave behind," Henry said. "He was speaking quietly with each one and giving them the money from his own purse."

"Yes, I saw it also," Sandie said quietly. "It was a sad and noble sight."

All were quiet for a moment and Kyd said, "What all else did we capture, Sandie?"

"It's impossible to know for certain. Large amounts of supplies were carried off by division wagons before any accounting could be made. Then there were the sutler's stores that the troops in the field ate up right away."

"One of Henry's men said he ate himself sick," Tom said.

"It was more than one!" Henry said and smiled.

"What we captured and counted amounts to a nice prize," Sandie said. "Over a hundred head of cattle. Seventeen tons of bacon. Over a ton of sugar.

Nearly a ton of salt beef. Twenty-three tons of hard bread. All sorts of harness, carpenter's tools, horseshoes and nails. Horses and wagons galore. A jackscrew. An iron maul."

"And what about the shoes?" Kyd said and laughed. "I hear we bagged us some women's and children's shoes!"

"My word!" Aunt Sarah said. "What on earth would the Yankees be doing with women's and children's shoes?"

"Seven dozen pair of women's and children's shoes, from what I hear!" Tom grinned.

"You hear well, Private Rose," Sandie shot Tom a look. "Missus Johnson, your guess is as good as mine as to why a Federal army would be toting around women's and children's shoes in any quantity."

Kyd raised his eyebrows and nodded, "We also captured seven pair of suspenders." As he spoke the servants moved discreetly about the table, careful neither to let a wine glass go empty nor spill a drop in the refilling.

"Among many other items," Sandie quickly said, hoping to forestall any risque jokes Kyd or the younger Rose brother might think to make regarding catching the Yankees with their pants down. "Then on our way back down the Valley a few days later, at Front Royal the Yankees were so

hot on our heels we had to burn warehouses containing twice what we were able to make off with."

"And at the risk of offending delicate sensibilities here at the table. . . ," Kyd began.

"Mister Douglas, you need have no concern regarding that," Aunt Sarah said. "I do not fear our sensibilities are so delicate after more than a year of war."

"Thank you, Missus Johnson. I hesitated because I thought to mention the weapons we captured. Enough muskets to outfit a large division of infantry, and a battery of cannon."

"Mister Douglas," Aunt Sarah said, "I think that rather than that news offend our sensibilities, it cheers them."

"Indeed it does," Becky said firmly. "Does the Army of the Valley get to keep all these supplies?"

"We only keep what we need, Miss Johnson," Kyd said. "Much of what we captured will be sent down to Richmond for General Lee's army."

From the kitchen the servants brought in the dessert, a five-layer strawberry cake.

"This is the pride and joy of our Cassandra," Dr. Kemper smiled broadly and waved a hand toward the cake. "She's been our cook for nigh-on thirty years now."

"Lovely!", "Beautiful!", "Looks delightful!", the others said, with Kyd saying, "We won't be sending the likes of this down to Richmond!"

"Do you think you boys will be going down that way?" Dr. Kemper asked.

"Hard to say, Doctor," Sandie said. "It seems as though our work here in the Valley may not yet be completed."

"I've heard that some of the new conscripts haven't been working out so well," the doctor said, "though I suppose that's not a surprise."

"The best soldiers are volunteers," Sandie said. "That new draft law is bringing us the dregs. The men who never wanted to fight."

"They're not all bad," Henry said. "We had two of our conscripts run away today. They had never before been under fire and availed themselves of the opportunity to escape in the confusion. I reckoned they wouldn't chance to show hide nor hair again, but one of them returned to camp this evening mortified at his lapse of behavior and begging forgiveness, which Captain Moore granted under the provision that the soldier not make skedaddling a habit."

They laughed and Becky watched Henry with clear affection and Tom noticed and Kyd said, “The soldier was probably mortified to find himself in battle so soon, though had he been paying attention to the news he would have known that this army is no stranger to battle, not even on the Sabbath!”

“It seems Old Jack would rather fight on Sunday than any other day,” Henry said, oblivious to his cousin’s gaze.

“We sure had ourselves some pretty fighting this Sabbath day,” Tom said. “Not what I quite expected I would find my first day up!”

“Didn’t expect to be captured quite so early on, did you, Tom?” Kyd said.

“Kyd, I didn’t ever expect to be captured at all!”

Through the laughter at the table came the doctor’s angry, almost peevish voice. “If those damn bluebellies would just go back home and mind their own business, we wouldn’t have to be having any fighting at all. Instead, they send their damn Abolitionist general into our valley with his freebooting, plundering German mercenaries!” He slapped his hand down on the table. “I’m sorry, it’s just I sometimes get so incensed. They have no business down here! They attempted to establish a form of government we find intolerable, and when we responded by attempting peacefully to leave

off being part of their country and become our own—as is our right!—they took actions which forced us to defend ourselves! As is our right!"

"And defend ourselves we shall!" Sandie said.

"Old Baldy's troops taught those German mercenaries a lesson today!" Kyd said. "Blasted a whole regiment of them with close volleys of buck-and-ball! Left hardly a Dutchie standing!"

"I wish they'd all been killed!" Becky said.

"Rebecca!" Aunt Sarah laid a hand on Becky's arm. "That's no way for a young lady to talk!"

"I don't care, Mama! After what they did to our farm!"

Aunt Sarah hoped Becky wouldn't get started on what the Dutchies did to their farm, it was quite upsetting. "Mister Douglas, you said something just a moment ago that I didn't quite catch. You said 'buckin' ball'?"

"Yes, ma'am," Kyd said with the same slight smile he almost always had. "Buck and ball. It's an ammunition load for a smoothbore musket. It consists of one large ball and three smaller buckshot. It is quite effective at close range."

"I hope it was very close range!" Becky hadn't touched a bite of her strawberry cake. She clutched her fork in her fist alongside her plate. "Those Germans are despicable! The Yankees hire the first trash to come out of

steerage in New York harbor, give it uniforms and guns, then march it into the Shenandoah Valley to pillage our farm!" She glanced at everyone as she spoke though she was speaking mostly to Henry. "You should see what they did! They took our flour, our hogs, our hay, our cow and our calf! The lard! All our bacon, the corn! They pointed a gun at Mama and called her a 'damned vebbel bitch'—"

" Becky!" Auth Sarah gasped.

"—and threatened to shoot her! Then they broke down the door and came in the house and took everything! They took our books, all our bedding, the family heirlooms! What they didn't take they threw to the floor and stamped all over with their big stupid muddy boots! They couldn't even speak English! Two of them took our bonnets and were prancing around in them! Then they went out back of the house and raided our beehives! I wish they'd all been stung to death! I wish they were all in hell!"

"Becky!" Aunt Sarah said, not gasping this time.

"Well, I don't wish they were there," Henry said, a forkful of cake poised before his mouth, "for if they were, Old Jack would be within a half-mile of them, with the Stonewall Brigade out in front!"

The young men laughed at this and Henry ate his forkful of cake, but Dr. Kemper and Aunt Sarah didn't laugh and Becky most decidedly did not laugh.

"They were horrid! Simply horrid!" Becky burst into tears. Tom and Aunt Sarah moved to console her and Dr. Kemper set down his fork and pulled off his napkin and rose from his chair.

"Poor thing. It's been a long day. Some medicinal spirits and a good night's rest and she'll feel much better." The doctor nodded to one of his servants and that servant left the room to fetch the brandy and a suitable glass. The other men were standing now, Sandie first and the others following his lead.

"We should be taking our leave, Doctor. Much obliged for your hospitality."

Kyd and Henry and Tom echoed Sandie's "much obliged" as Aunt Sarah ushered a softy sobbing Becky into a side parlor where the servant waited with the medicinal spirits.

"I have to be getting back to camp myself," Henry said. "I imagine we'll have a busy day tomorrow." He and Tom quickly embraced. "You stay out of trouble, little brother."

"Don't you worry about me. I'll be all right enough. You just make sure you take care of your own self. You're the one who is going to be where all the shooting and stabbing is."

Sandie shook Henry's hand. "Don't you worry about your brother, Henry. I'll keep an eye out for him." To Kyd and Tom he said, "Gentlemen, we'd best be getting to the hotel. Old Jack is headquartering there tonight. He will be meeting with General Ewell, after which I expect he may have some work for us to do."

Jackson met with Ewell in a small but comfortable sitting room at the hotel in Port Republic. Jackson was a little hard of hearing since the Mexican War and the two generals sat in chairs drawn closely together.

"Frémont displayed nothing but the most impotent generalship today, Thomas," Ewell said in his high, thin lisp.

"He is no good," Jackson nodded, "though his army is large. At earliest dawn tomorrow, Richard, I will need you to move the bulk of your division over the bridge. Leave a small rear guard to cover your withdrawal. Have them make a great show and parade, so as to magnify their numbers in the Yankees' imaginations."

"Earliest dawn—that hour when the glow will show, as the old soldiers say. Once I have my men across the bridge, what then?"

"Make sure the bridge is burned behind you, and march to the sound of the guns. I will be taking the Stonewall Brigade over the Lower Ford to march down the river at early dawn. If it be God's will, we shall pay a visit upon Mister Shields."

As soon as the generals were done conferring and Ewell had departed to return to his command near Cross Keys, Jackson summoned Pendelton into the room.

"Sandie, I need you to ride out to Munford's cavalry, take one of his best companies, and ride up the Brown's Gap Road. I wish you to ascertain if that road is open. If it is, leave the company there to guard it. Report back to me in person as speedily as possible."

"Yes, sir."

"Send Mister Douglas in, please."

Pendelton left the room and Douglas came in to find Jackson pacing the floor.

"Lieutenant, I wish for you to go down to the Lower Ford. Captain Mason is there with his battalion of African Pioneers. They are building a footbridge over the ford to speed the passage of our infantry. I desire you to

stay there a little while and look to see how the work is progressing. Then report back to me."

"Yes, sir."

"Send in that new orderly, please."

Kyd found Tom waiting in the hall. "The General would like to see you, Private Rose."

Tom went into the sitting room where General Jackson sat at a small table writing a short note.

"Private Rose reporting, sir!"

Jackson finished writing, folded the paper, and handed it to Tom.

"Private, take these orders to General Winder at once. Hand them to him personally."

"Yes, sir!"

Tom stood at attention inside General Winder's tent. Several lamps therein gave off weak yellow light. The general, disheveled and in his undershirt, uniform pants and boots, had just awoken. He sat on his cot and read the orders: *General Winder—have your brigade ready to move out by 4:45 this morning—Thos. J. Jackson, Gen'l Commanding, etc.*

Winder scratched his head and blinked his eyes and ran a hand through his narrow beard.

"What time is it, soldier?"

"It's about three forty-five, sir."

Captain Claiborne Mason and Lieutenant Kyd Douglas sat astride their horses on the town side of the Lower Ford. They watched the Battalion of African Pioneers building the footbridge by torchlight. The workers wrestled wagons into place end-to-end in the South River and lashed them together. Across the tops of the wagons they affixed long boards for the soldiers to march on when morning came and Jackson ordered his army to cross.

Douglas sat upright but had dozed off when Mason's voice awoke him.

"Kyd? Kyd, you can go tell General Jackson that the bridge is done and he can take his folks and things over."

Douglas yawned. "Very well, Captain. Thank you."

Jackson slept in a chair in the sitting room at the hotel. Douglas stood before him.

"General Jackson, sir."

Jackson still slept.

"General Jackson, sir!" Douglas said more loudly.

Jackson calmly opened his eyes. "Lieutenant? Report."

"General, Captain Mason wishes me to inform you that the bridge is finished and ready for your army."

"Very well." Jackson sat up straight and arched his back. "Have the long roll sounded."

Chapter 3

Dawn was showing in the eastern sky as the growing sound of the long roll spread through the Confederate camps. Freshly-awakened Confederate soldiers pulled on their clothes and stumbled out of their tents and into formation. Pendelton rode past them and stopped at the hotel where he dismounted and tied his horse and went inside. Jackson was standing by the chair he had slept in and was fastening on his swordbelt.

"General!" Pendelton saluted.

Jackson returned his salute. "Lieutenant. Report."

"Sir, Brown's Gap Road is open and is presently held by a company of Colonel Munford's cavalry. The colonel sends his regards."

"Thank you, Sandie. I wish you to assemble the staff and prepare to move out."

By the time the first soldiers were ready to cross the bridge over the Lower Ford the light was good and sunrise not far off. Two lines of planks had been laid across the wagons and the soldiers marched in double file. Captain Moore, Lieutenant Rose, Elijah Cornwall, Billy the coosh-cooker, and the rest of Company I were among the first soldiers to cross.

"Be careful, men!" Moore called back down the line. "The middle wagon is higher than the others and the plank on one side is a little loose! Watch your step!"

A cannon and its limber crossed the ford, splashing through the water just downstream of the bridge. Jackson and his staff, walking their horses rather than riding them, crossed the bridge in a break between two regiments of infantry.

At the other end of town, at the Upper Ford, the army's wagon train moved out two abreast, splashing through the river and rumbling up Brown's Gap Road. A few mounted horsemen rode with them in a scattered escort. Leading the way were the ambulances filled with the wounded who could be moved but couldn't walk on their own. Doctor McGuire finished one last check on them then watched as the wagons lumbered off.

At Ewell's camp a few miles to the north, General Richard Taylor led his brigade of Louisianans as they marched out of camp on their way to Port

Republic. Taylor was the son of one president and the brother-in-law of another and was a handsome irascible aristocrat who tended to grow playful as a kitten during battle. The first formation in the marching order was Wheat's Tigers. Taylor sat astride his horse and watched them closely as they passed. General Ewell and his staff trotted by on their way out of camp.

"Pleasant morning to go hunting bluebellies, General!" Ewell called out.

"I expect we'll bag us quite a few, sir!" Taylor saluted.

The men of Company I, Second Virginia Volunteers, marched along a farm road near the head of the long column that was the Stonewall Brigade. The sun was full up and the morning air cool and laced with the aromas of late spring flowers and the sounds of singing birds and tramping feet and the occasional distant pop of a skirmisher's musket.

Generals Jackson and Winder and their staffs rode along the column. A rider, Colonel Thomas Munford, whose distant, almost sleepy expression belied his abilities as a cavalry commander, cantered up.

"General Jackson! General Winder!"

"Colonel Munford!" Jackson said. "Report!

"Sir, Shields has pushed his infantry pickets forward this morning, but that was not unexpected." Munford rode along with the generals and pointed out various locations as he spoke. "His main line is just about two miles away, up along that low, wooded ridge. He has a large brigade of infantry, some three thousand Midwestern men from Ohio, Indiana, and Wisconsin. They have artillery stretched along and behind that crest. He can swing his regiments out onto the valley floor and fight us along a series of fences, lanes, and shallow runs over several adjoining farms. His position is hinged on that knoll to the right there, on his left flank. It's called the Coaling. He has a battery of cannon up there. That knoll is the end of this ridge here, curving from the Coaling around to our right. The woods are not too dense, but are brushy. There are apparently some trails through them, though I do not know their extent."

"Thank you, Colonel," Jackson said. "That information is appreciated. I will send infantry to relieve your pickets. When you are relieved, take your command to the Brown's Gap Road and join the company that's on picket there. I want you to keep that road open and protect the wagons. The rest of the army will be with you presently."

Jackson saluted the colonel, who returned his salute, "Yes, sir!" and turned and cantered off the way he had come. Jackson turned to Winder.

“General, deploy your skirmishers and advance your regiments. I shall have the artillery brought up. Sandie!”

“Yes, sir?” Pendelton said and moved in closer to the generals.

“Sandie, have Poague’s battery brought up. Tell Captain Poague he is to move forward until he comes under fire, then he is to deploy his guns.”

A Confederate horseman rode up one of the valley’s farm lanes to a prosperous farmhouse. The family there, women and children and an old man but no men of military age, were gathered on the porch with their servants. They had heard the skirmish fire and seen the scouting riders.

“Clear out!” the horseman shouted. “Clear out! There is going to be a battle here!”

Poague’s battery trotted and rattled and rolled by the soldiers of the Stonewall Brigade. From out of sight in front of them came sporadic gunfire sounding like popping corn in a covered skillet over a low fire. The soldiers’ faces showed serious and sometimes frightened expressions. They were within a half-mile of the Union guns on the Coaling, over which twin puffs of white smoke appeared. A growing screaming whistle was immediately

followed by twin explosions near the Confederates. Men and horses were frightened but none were hurt.

More white puffs appeared over the Coaling as the rest of the Union guns there joined in the barrage. The sound of their firing could be heard between the screaming whistles of their incoming shells and roundshot. Shells exploded and roundshot plowed the ground.

"Deploy the Parrots!" Poague shouted as his horse reared and danced. "Pull the smoothbores back!"

The Coaling was a flat open place on the spur of a low ridge overlooking the valley. Before the war it had been used to prepare charcoal. At the top of the spur were a few trees. Among them and down the side of the spur the Federals had deployed six cannon. Four were modern Parrot rifles and two were the older-style Napoleon smoothbores. They were manned by full crews working hard and begrimed by smoke, dust, and black powder. Immediately behind the guns were the caissons and horses. A few of the horses were new to combat and were jumpy from the noise. Their drivers spoke to them and held their harness to calm them.

The family at the prosperous farmhouse could see the Union cannons on the Coaling. The sounds of their firing and the explosions from their shells seemed terribly close. Musket fire could also be heard and the occasional stray Minié ball buzzed close by.

Four black field hands hoisted a bed up onto their shoulders. On the bed was a frail-looking young white woman and her newborn baby. Other servants and family members carried necessities bundled in aprons and linens. One middle-aged white woman led the way.

"We must leave now!" she said. "We dare not delay!"

Jackson and Winder and their small clutch of staff officers and orderlies rode to the front of the battlefield, a narrow expanse of wheatfields not far from where Poague's battery was deployed, its two Parrot rifles engaged in an unequal duel with the Union guns on the Coaling. Captain Poague caught sight of the generals and rode to them.

"Gentlemen!" he saluted. "The enemy battery on the Coaling have taken us under heavy fire. We can reach them only with our Parrots and the Yankees have the angle on us since they are firing down. We are firing up and half our shells are passing over their battery and exploding behind them."

"Very well," Jackson replied, then to Winder said, "General, have your infantry deploy in line of battle and move forward over these fields." Turning back to Poague, he said, "Captain, continue as you are with your Parrots. Send your smoothbores forward with General Winder's infantry."

"Yes, sir!" Poague saluted and rode off to supervise his battery. Jackson studied the wooded ridge that ran in a slight curve up the right side of the battlefield.

"General Winder, have you any men from hereabouts?"

"Yes, sir, we have some. I do believe Captain Moore has one or two new conscripts from the town itself." Winder turned to one of his mounted staff, "Jones! Bring up Captain Moore's company at once!"

Jones galloped off down the column of infantry and Jackson said to Winder, "General, I wish you to send Captain Moore around by your right flank, along that wooded ridge," Jackson pointed. "When he reaches the Coaling, he is to take the enemy under heavy fire. If it is his judgment that he can successfully capture the battery, then he is to do that also."

Moore and his company came trotting up at the double-quick.

"Company, halt!" Moore ordered and they did. He turned to General Winder and saluted, "Company I, Second Virginia Volunteers, reporting, sir!"

Winder returned his salute. “Captain, I understand you have some new conscripts who may be familiar with the terrain.”

“You heard the General!” Moore said to his company. “Who of you here may know this terrain?”

Elijah Cornwall anxiously stepped forward one step. “Sir, I think I may know it fairly well. I’ve lived in Port Republic my whole life.” He pointed toward the wooded ridge. “I go hunting up in them hills all the time.”

Jackson looked at this nervous boy who wore a homespun butternut uniform and carried a rifle that looked to be almost longer than he was tall. “Could you guide your company through the hills and to that battery on the Coaling?”

Cornwall swallowed and said, “Sir! Yes, sir! I could. I could do that.”

Jackson looked to Winder. “General?”

Winder told Moore Jackson’s orders while Jackson turned to Tom Rose.

“Private Rose, I wish you to accompany Captain Moore. Take your horse with you as far as it can go, then tie it and continue on foot. After Captain Moore has launched his attack, report back to me immediately in person.”

The farm family fleeing the battle reached the South Fork of the Shenandoah. Three flat-bottomed boats were tied there along the near bank. The four servants carrying the bed with the young woman and her infant carefully, with the help of two more servants, maneuvered the bed onto one of the boats and sat down with it still on their shoulders and without upsetting or dropping it. The two extra servants untied the boat, took up barge poles and pushed off to the other side of the river. The remainder of the family and servants followed in the other two boats.

The Union gunners on the Coaling worked their guns in a quick, well-practiced rhythm. The battlefield stretching in front of them was fields mostly of wheat and corn and alfalfa, sprinkled with a few farmhouses and trees and cut through with lanes and dry runs and split-rail fences. Shells from Poague's rifled Parrots screamed overhead.

Winder's regiments, totaling about five hundred men and with their flags unfurled, advanced across the battlefield in line of battle toward the Union positions, passing Poague's guns. The Union cannonade from the Coaling had decimated Poague's battery horses and now began hitting Winder's lines, taking down sometimes several men at once.

Beyond the Coaling, stretching back up the ridge out of sight of the Confederates, Union infantry were arrayed in line of battle in the woods. Their colonel stood before them.

"Aim low, men, and at every shot let a traitor fall!"

The men responded with the loud and low-pitched "Hurrah!" of the Union troops. Their officers gave the order and they began marching down off the ridge and out of the woods and into the farm fields on the valley floor. Coming from a half-mile or more in front of them they heard the eerie, high-pitched Rebel yell.

Thick white clouds of gunpowder smoke filled the calm, cool morning air. Through gaps in the smoke the Federal troops could see the advancing Confederates' flags and their lines of infantry, and two of Poague's smoothbores alongside the Confederate lines, firing at the advancing Federals. The din from musket and cannon fire was all but unbearable. The officers yelled commands that were barely heard and their soldiers halted and opened fire. The heads of the wheat and corn danced jerkily and fell. Men were hit and went down. Others were hit not badly enough to be killed or even knocked down, but badly enough to be knocked out of the fight. They turned and fell out of line and made for the rear. Sometimes a friend or two

or three thought to help. The officers stopped these helpers wherever they could, sometimes threatening them with the flat of a sword.

"You men get back on the line! The best way to protect our wounded friends is to do our duty in the line and drive the enemy back!"

The unwounded returned to the line and resumed firing until they, too, were shot.

The planks of the wagon bridge loosened and bounced under the feet of the Confederate troops. Wheat's Tigers were crossing and the one plank on the high middle wagon grew so loose and springy it began pitching baggy-pantsed soldiers into the river. Major Dabney was on the scene and stopped a passing officer.

"Lieutenant! Where are Captain Mason and his pioneers? You need them to repair that bridge!"

"Major, I do not have any idea who you are talking about," the lieutenant drawled and continued on his way. Dabney, horseback alongside the column of Confederate soldiers, tried to flag down several more officers as they passed but none would pay him any mind. Traffic across the bridge slowed as it narrowed to single file over the one stable plank crossing the

high middle wagon. General Taylor and his staff, mounted on their horses, trotted up to where Dabney fumed on the near side of the makeshift bridge.

"Major Dabney!" Taylor's greeting was both cheerful and foreboding in tone. "Fine morning for a fight!"

"Yes, sir, General, it is," Dabney saluted. "But it is slow going to get there over this confounded bridge!" He pointed, "It needs repair and Captain Mason has taken his pioneers off to someplace else!"

Taylor studied the situation a moment. "Well, damn it all to hell! Pardon me, Parson, my language."

"That is quite all right, sir." Dabney was clearly annoyed and it was not clear if he was annoyed at the language or the situation or both.

Taylor turned to one of his staff officers, "Captain, have the rest of the regiments march over the ford downstream of the bridge. Then have them assemble on the far side and dry themselves out."

"Yes, sir!" the captain saluted and wheeled his horse to pass the orders.

"God damn it, we shall get them across!" Taylor said, then, "Please pardon my language, Parson."

"General, that is quite all right," Dabney stiffly said.

Elijah Cornwall led Captain Moore's company into the woods where he had hunted squirrel and deer only a few weeks previous. He held his newly-acquired fine Belgian rifled musket at the ready. Henry, sword drawn and held low, walked behind him. A couple paces behind them walked Moore and Tom. Tom had left his horse behind and carried a large pistol over a foot in length, a black ungainly revolver called a Colt Walker. Moore carried his drawn sword in one hand and in the other his own revolver, a somewhat smaller and more manageable Colt Navy. The rest of the company followed along the narrow trail through the brushy woods. The sounds of the Union cannons firing from the Coaling grew louder.

"It's off to the left," Cornwall said. "It should be coming up soon. It turns back towards the bluff that's right across the ravine from the Coaling. You can't hardly see it if you're coming up the road from the river. If you're coming the other way you can see it fine. It's wide enough for five or six men to march abreast, I reckon.

"Here it is!" Cornwall pointed at the opening of the wide lane, its floor overgrown with mountain grasses and wildflowers. "That's where we turn, Lieutenant. Captain," he said, turning and looking behind him, "this is it."

"Lead the way, Private," Moore said, nodding to Henry to remain on point with Cornwall. Tom and Moore and the rest of the company followed.

The sound of the Union cannonade grew louder and it wasn't long before Cornwall stopped and said, "There they are, Lieutenant!"

Henry could see them, through the brushy woods and across a small ravine. The Union gunners, many with their shirts removed and their skin wet with sweat and black with powder, worked their battery furiously. They had not noticed the two dozen Confederates in the woods across the ravine to their left.

Moore and Tom joined Henry and Cornwall at the head of the now motionless column. Moore studied the Union position.

"Henry, I do not believe we can take that position by main force."

"I agree, Captain. But we can lay down a galling fire. Make those guns extremely hazardous to the Yankees manning them."

Moore nodded and pointed, "Let's have the men form in line along the woods here. Instruct them to take deliberate aim and to fire at the gunners upon my command." To Tom he said, "Private, report back to Generals Winder and Jackson. Tell them we are taking positions and will soon commence firing. Tell them also that I do not believe we can take the battery with the men present, but it could be taken with reinforcements."

"Yes, sir!" Tom and Henry exchanged a quick glance. Tom thought to say something to his brother but didn't know what. He turned back down the

wide trail the company had just come up. His brother and Captain Moore began ordering the men into a firing line along the woods at the edge of the ravine. Once the line seemed about ready, Moore checked it one more time, looking up and down it to be sure all was right. Noncoms gave hand signals that their men were ready. Henry checked, too, then looked at his captain. Moore made eye contact with him and raised his sword. He was about to bring his sword down with the command to fire when he saw movement at the far right end of the line. A couple soldiers there were still getting into position. Captain Moore waited.

Two gunshots in quick succession rang out from the far left end of the line. Moore turned around sharply. On the Coaling, one Union gunner fell. Others looked in the direction of Moore's men.

"Hold your fire!" Henry yelled. "Hold your fire!"

Most of the Union gunners hadn't heard the shots over the sounds of their cannonading and the racket of the battle being fought in the fields below them. Those who had seen their fellow fall were shouting and gesticulating and quickly as they could were turning two of their cannon to fire on Moore's men across the ravine.

"Fire!" Moore shouted and sharply brought down his sword. Confused by the premature shots and the conflicting orders of their lieutenant and

their captain, the men let loose a ragged volley. Tom wasn't very far down the trail when he heard the two shots followed less than a minute later by the volley. He hesitated a moment, wanting to turn back and be with his brother, then continued on his way as Captain Moore had ordered.

Beyond the one gunner felled by the early musket shot, Moore's company's first volley did no harm and only served to alert all the Federals on the Coaling to the presence of Confederates on their immediate flank. Some of the gunners took cover behind their pieces and caissons and even their horses. Those who had turned the two guns to point across the ravine prepared them for firing.

"Canister, boys!" a Union sergeant yelled. "Let's give 'em hell!"

The gunners loaded the can-shaped canister rounds into their cannons. Across the ravine, the Confederates continued firing. Captain Moore had put up his sword and used his pistol.

"Fire! Fire! Keep firing!"

His soldiers feverishly reloaded and fired again. Cornwall was in the firing line in front of Henry. He hadn't been terribly frightened when he was leading the company through the woods but now he was so scared he could barely keep his hands from shaking the black powder of his cartridge almost

anywhere but down the muzzle of his rifle. He heard Henry's voice coming from behind him.

"Steady, boys! Steady! Keep firing!"

Cornwall got his musket loaded, the powder and ball in and rammed home and the cap in place, and raised it to his shoulder to fire. Across the ravine the Union sergeant bawled, "Fire!" just as Cornwall pulled the trigger. The sergeant dropped with a catastrophic heavy suddenness when the Minié ball from Cornwall's rifle tore through his chest.

An instant later the Union gunners fired their cannon at Moore's men. The canister rounds blasted the Confederate line. Men were hit and cried out and others were hit and made no sound and fell.

"Steady, boys!" Moore shouted.

"Steady!" Henry joined in. "Keep firing!"

The Yankees fired again. More of the Rebels were hit.

"Captain, we can't take much more of this!" Henry said.

"I'm afraid you are right!" Moore said. At least a half-dozen of his men were down. Several others had been hit but were still standing and doing their best to continue firing on the Union battery. "Have the men fall back and re-form!"

"Fall back!" Henry looked up and down the line and waved his sword over his head. "Fall back!"

"Fall back, men!" Moore shouted. "Regroup at the clearing! Fall back!"

The unhurt men scampered back from the firing line, trying to stay low and keep covered from the Union fire. Some of the wounded made their way back as best they could. Others were too badly wounded to get up. One of these was Cornwall. He was slumped forward in a crumpled way a few feet in front of Henry, at the edge of the woods above the ravine. He moved one arm as if trying to force himself up. Henry went to help him and saw right away that Cornwall was grievously wounded, gut-shot and broken-legged by what must have been several of the iron balls of a canister round.

"I done good, hain't I, Lieutenant?" Cornwall's voice had a high, strained whine, like that of a child's when the child is being punished and isn't certain why. "I made up for yesterday, din't I?"

"You have done very well, Private Cornwall," Henry sheathed his sword. "I wouldn't be surprised if they made a corporal out of you." Henry grabbed Cornwall under the arms and tried to pull him back. As soon as he started pulling, Cornwall screamed such that Henry almost dropped him, and let him down gently instead.

"Lieutenant, I'm afraid they're not gonna be makin' nothin' outta me."

"Nonsense, soldier! Let's get you out of here!" Another round of canister howled overhead and Henry again tried to move Cornwall and Cornwall again screamed as though the life were leaving him that instant.

Cornwall gasped and sobbed, "No no no, it's no use, Lieutenant it hurts too much, it's, no."

From some little distance behind him, Henry heard Captain Moore order, "Lieutenant Rose! Fall back!"

Henry quickly unstrapped his canteen from where it hung across his shoulder. Just as he made to unstopper its neck and leave it with Cornwall, a Union canister round slammed into the two soldiers. Cornwall took the brunt of it and was immediately and gruesomely slaughtered, chunks of his brains and scalp and face blown back into Henry's face and chest. One of the canister balls sliced through Henry's right forearm, snapping it in two and sending his canteen flying into the ravine. The force of the impact knocked him down into the brush and onto Cornwall's mangled corpse.

Having repulsed Moore's company, the Union battery ceased firing at the ridge across the ravine. The gunners of the two pieces that had been turned to the flank turned them back to fire again on the Confederates on the battlefield down in the valley.

Henry, sweating and grimacing and pale and gasping, freed himself from the tangle of brush and Elijah Cornwall. He sat a moment and examined his arm. It was a bloody mess, hit several inches above the wrist, the bones shattered. He cradled it in his other arm and got to his feet and half ran, half staggered back to the rest of his company. He fell by Captain Moore.

"Henry, how bad is it?" Moore gingerly took hold of Henry's arms and looked at his lieutenant's wound.

"I'm afraid it's pretty bad, Captain," Henry was sweating and shivering. "It looks like I'm out of this fight."

"Let's get that bound up," Moore said, and he and Billy the coosh-cooker quickly wrapped Henry's arm in strips of cloth torn from a shirt a soldier wouldn't need anymore. Henry winced and gasped from the pain. The makeshift bandage was quickly soaked with blood.

A Union shell slammed in and exploded under one of Captain Poague's Parrot rifles, knocking one of its gunners into the path of the other Parrot as it recoiled from firing. Several of the battery's other gunners were already down, hit by musket fire or shrapnel. Some of the battery's horses were also down.

A Confederate regiment advanced at a walk past Poague's rifles and to the edge of a wheatfield, men pausing to fire their muskets and reload. Smoke filled the air and it was difficult to see much of what was going on. General Winder and several of his staff were on horseback not far behind the regiment. With no warning a Union regiment waiting prone in the wheatfield stood up and delivered a volley that staggered the Confederates.

"Fall back!" Winder ordered. "Fall back!"

The Yankees fired again. Winder's horse was hit and went down. The general jumped clear and hit the ground and rolled. He was unharmed and quickly got to his feet.

"Ride back and bring up the rest of the brigade!" he shouted to one staffer. To another he shouted, "Find General Jackson and tell him we will need more men on this line!"

The last regiment of Taylor's brigade trickled over the unsteady wagon bridge at the Lower Ford. From two miles ahead of them came the sounds of battle, muffled by the distance. Behind them the town of Port Republic filled with troops as the rest Ewell's division arrived from Cross Keys, marching down the bluff across the river and onto the covered wooden bridge.

Taylor and his staff were on horseback across the Lower Ford, watching the last of his brigade come over. Near them were the troops Taylor had earlier ordered to cross directly over the ford rather than wait to use the wagon bridge. They ate hardtack and uncooked bacon while they dried their uniforms in the sun.

Jackson's aide Hutchins galloped up to Taylor and his staff and saluted and handed over a dispatch. Taylor took it and read it.

"Gentlemen!" he said, lifting his eyes from the paper. "The ball is open and we are invited! General Jackson requests our immediate presence upon the field of battle! Have the brigade formed up!"

Jackson, Pendelton, and Douglas sat astride their horses just to the rear of the fighting on the field below the Coaling. Winder, afoot, was beside them. Jackson leaned down to speak to him over the noise of battle. Minié balls whizzed through the air with the sound of large and fiercely angry bumblebees.

"General Taylor's brigade shall be on the field shortly, sir, and I have had word sent to General Ewell to expedite his arrival also. I need you to keep the Yankees engaged to your front. Advance again as soon as you are ready. Do not delay!"

“I understand, sir!” General Winder saluted. “We shall do our best, General! Your Virginia boys won’t let you down!”

Winder turned to rejoin his brigade, its ranks exhausted and thinned and now numbering fewer than a thousand men. Jackson said to Douglas, “Lieutenant, I wish you to find Captain Carrington’s battery. His men, being new to the service, may have lost their way.”

There was neither humor nor irony in Jackson’s tone, nor was there anger. Douglas saluted and said, “Yes, sir!”, glanced at Pendelton, then rode off to do as ordered.

The last of Ewell’s men marched across the bridge into Port Republic. Ewell and his staff followed, riding their horses down the bluff. Ewell turned to one of his staff and said in his high-pitched lisp, “Tell the pickets to hightail their butts down here now! As soon as they are across, we shall burn this bridge!”

“Yes, sir!” the staffer said and wheeled his horse back up the bluff.

“And tell them to hurry!” Ewell called after him. “If they do not, they shall wind up all alone on the Union side of the river!”

Ewell and his staff crossed over and waited for the bridge to be prepared for burning while the pickets came in from their posts. The soldiers

tasked with the burning piled brush and scrap lumber high up inside the covered bridge and took torches and set the bridge alight. Black smoke followed by flames billowed into the clear bright sky.

A company of Confederate horsemen galloped over the edge of the bluff and down to the bridge to cross but they were too late. Confederate infantry across the bridge, fearing that these horsemen were Union, opened fire on them.

Ewell snatched off his hat and waved it frantically over his head and screamed, “Hold your fire! Hold your fire! Goddamn it, you fucking imbeciles, those are our men! Hold your fire!”

The Confederate infantry ceased fire. The horsemen across the river milled around, then began plunging their horses into the river to swim them across. Ewell and his staff rode to the near bank and dismounted and joined the soldiers there in helping the horsemen and their mounts out of the water. Not all of the men and horses made it safely across.

Lieutenant Douglas rode up and threw General Ewell a salute. “Nicely done, sir!”

“Thank you, Lieutenant! Frémont will be by in a while. What I would give to see the look on that fucker’s face when he realizes he’s been shat upon once again!” Ewell whooped with joy and climbed back on his horse.

Douglas smiled and said, “General Ewell, the General Commanding has instructed me to have Captain Carrington’s battery brought forward with haste. I have found them tangled up with some of your division just shy of the ford. A colonel there informed me that I lacked sufficient authority for him to order his troops to make way for Carrington’s battery. Could I trouble you to dispatch me with some person who has such authority?”

“Dispatch?” Ewell squeaked. “Hell, I’ll dispatch myself! We’ll get this goddamned colonel of mine sorted out! I know just who it is, too! The stupid ass!”

Ewell spurred his horse lightly and cantered through town, Douglas and members of the general’s staff following. Ewell shortly found the offending colonel near the Lower Ford.

“You sorry son-of-a-bitch! You slut-fucking pile of stinking mule shit! This man,” Ewell pointed at Douglas, “is an officer on General Jackson’s staff! When he comes to you with a request, you are to regard that request as a direct order coming from the mouth of the General Commanding!”

“Yes, sir!” The colonel stood to attention, his expression a combination of mortification and fear.

"Now you get your men out of the goddamned way and let Carrington's battery by! And if you fuck up again I'll see to it that you spend the rest of the war polishing boots in Richmond!"

Jackson, Pendelton, and Hutchins waited near Poague's rifles, which had pulled back out of the battle that still raged only a couple hundred yards away. The gunners filled their limbers with ammunition pulled from their caissons. They took swigs of water from their canteens and wiped their sweating dirty faces with grimy rags.

Tom Rose came galloping up and reined to a halt and saluted, "General Jackson!"

Jackson returned his salute, "Private Rose! Report!"

"General, Captain Moore sent me back to inform you he was taking position and would soon commence his attack!"

"Did you remain with him until he launched his attack?"

"No, sir, but I heard—"

"Soldier!" Jackson's ice-blue eyes lit up in a sudden fierce anger. "I did not order you to hear! I ordered you to remain with Captain Moore until he launched his attack! Why did you disobey my orders!"

Tom was stunned, his eyes wide, “Sir, Captain Moore ordered me to—”

“Private, Captain Moore is not your commanding officer! Do not disobey my orders again!”

For a moment the day was too much for Tom and he felt about to burst into sobs and turn his horse and gallop away as fast and far as he could go. He gulped a deep breath and said, “Yes, sir! I will not!”

“Have you finished your report, soldier?” Jackson’s anger had passed but he was stern. A cannonball bounced by quickly a few yards behind the officers.

“No, sir.”

“Then proceed!”

“Sir, I heard gunfire that was unmistakably from Captain Moore’s company. It was two shots, followed by a ragged volley. The Union artillery then fired. I heard continuing musket fire and cannon fire as I moved off.”

“Jumpy trigger fingers,” Pendelton said.

“No doubt,” Jackson curtly said, and then to Tom, “Anything else?”

“Yes, sir. Captain Moore said he couldn’t take the battery with the men he had, but it could be done with reinforcements.”

As Tom said this Pendelton and then the others were distracted by a noise coming from behind them and they turned to see General Taylor on horseback leading his brigade in column up through the now-trampled fields.

"And here the reinforcements are," Pendelton said.

Taylor and his staff, also mounted, peeled away from the brigade and cantered up to Jackson and his staff. Behind Taylor, the line officers of his brigade ordered their commands to halt. Wheat's Tigers were at the head of the column.

"Good morning, General!" Taylor greeted Jackson. The sounds of battle were growing louder.

"Good morning, sir! Delightful excitement we have this morning!"

"Delightful indeed! I am pleased to learn that you are enjoying yourself!" Taylor quickly surveyed the battlefield. Clearly it was not his first look. He immediately pointed toward the Coaling. "But unless that park of artillery on the Union left can be taken, you are defeated!"

"It is my hope your brigade shall remedy that! General Winder sent a company around our right to bring that battery under a flanking fire. The captain commanding reports that the battery can be taken with sufficient men."

General Ewell galloped up from the same direction Taylor and his brigade had just come. With Ewell were his staff and Kyd Douglas, followed by Carrington's battery.

"Gentlemen!" Ewell saluted. "We have a pretty day for battle! General Jackson, I have found me a sweet flock of lost lambkins! Artillery lambkins, your favorite kind!"

"Much obliged, General!" Jackson returned Ewell's salute. "How soon can you have the rest of your command up?"

"My Alabamians should be here shortly. My Georgians are some few minutes behind them."

"Good," Jackson nodded to the two generals. "I am glad you both are here. The resistance is more obstinate than I anticipated. General Ewell, I should like you to see to the arrival of your men. General Taylor, I have an orderly who should be able to guide your men around through those woods," Jackson pointed to the low wooded ridge on the army's right flank. To Tom he said, "Private, guide General Taylor and his men through the woods to Captain Moore's company, then report back to me immediately. Do I make myself clear?"

"Yes, sir!"

Tom, Taylor, and Wheat, followed by Wheat's Tigers in their exotic uniforms, reached the point in the path through the woods where it connected with the wider wagon trail and angled back.

"This the way, Private?"

"Yes, sir."

It was a short distance more before they reached the copse where Moore's survivors were huddled.

"Captain Moore! I've brought General Taylor and his men!" Tom said when he saw the captain, then saw Henry lying under cover in the brush, his face very pale and his arm wrapped in bloody rags. "Henry! My God, Henry! What has happened to you?" Tom went to his brother and knelt by him, wanting to touch him but afraid to.

"Ah, little brother," Henry weakly said. "Little brother, I have been a trifle hurt."

From behind him Tom heard Major Wheat.

"Soldier! What is the meaning of this!"

Without turning to look at the major, Tom said, "It's my brother! It's my brother!"

Captain Moore stood when he saw the two generals. He saluted, "Gentlemen! Captain Samuel Moore, 'I' Company, Second Virginia Volunteers.

We have engaged the enemy battery, but I regret to report they proved too much for us. I have lost a quarter of my men killed or wounded, including my adjutant here, Lieutenant Rose."

Tom moved closer to Henry and carefully took him by the shoulders and looked up at the officers, his eyes wild, "I've got to get him out of here!" To his brother then, "Henry, we have got to get you out of here!"

"Settle down, little brother," Henry's voice was gentle. "Settle down. Everything is going to be all right. Do you have orders to gather any wounded from off the battlefield?"

"No, but—."

Henry put a finger to his lips. "Shush, baby brother. What are your orders?"

"They are to report back to General Jackson as soon as I have brought up General Taylor and his men, but—"

Henry took his brother's hand.

"No! No! You follow your orders, Private Thomas Rose. I will be all right. I am not going anywhere. You may return for me after the battle."

Tears welled up in Tom's eyes, "But, Henry—"

Henry let go of his brother's hand and put a finger to his lips again. "Tommy, Tommy, I said no buts. Do your duty. I must rest a while. Go on now.

Be a good boy. You are a soldier now. You must obey." Henry lay back and closed his eyes. Tom hesitated and then stood, tears starting down his cheeks. Behind him, Taylor and Wheat and Moore discussed the Union battery on the Coaling and how to take it. Tom turned to them and saluted General Taylor.

"Sir, General Jackson is expecting me to report back immediately!"

"Then I suggest you do that, soldier. Tell Old Jack that we shall be attacking presently. He shall be sure to hear us when we do. And we'll look after your brother."

"Don't worry for Henry's sake, Tom," Moore said. "His wound looks worse than it is."

Tom wasn't sure if he could believe that but he wanted to. He quickly saluted and turned and ran back down the mountain trail to where he had tied his horse. He ran as fast as he could and didn't much care that branches grabbed at him and tore his clothes and scratched his face. When he reached his horse he allowed himself to be overwhelmed and sank to the forest floor, retching in great gasping sobs. His brother was terribly wounded and might die and there was nothing he could do and the cannons roared on the Coaling and he couldn't make them stop and down on the battlefield the muskets sounded like one constant ripping explosion and through it all he could hear

men shouting or even screaming and he couldn't make any of it stop and he had to get hold of himself and report to General Jackson who was known to have men shot for looking at him wrong or that's what Tom had heard and how was he to know if it was true or not when he didn't know what was true but he knew the general had looked through him as though he might shoot him himself for the mistake Tom had made and he couldn't make another he had to get hold of himself he had to get up and wipe the snot and tears from his face and the dirt from off his uniform and he had to get on that horse and report to the general because those were his orders and he had volunteered to serve.

Moore discussed the situation with Taylor and Wheat. "How many men have you brought with you?" he asked the general.

"Well over a thousand, Captain."

Wheat looked up and down the line along the ridge. "It will take some time to deploy that many through these woods."

"Captain," Taylor said, "what do you know of the terrain and the enemy dispositions?"

"The Coaling is right over there a little ways," Moore pointed, "just the other side of a ravine. The enemy has moved some riflemen up onto that

ridge that runs up from the Coaling to our right, I know not in what numbers. The brush is thick, but I believe your men can be deployed in line of battle through it on both sides of our position here."

"General," Wheat said, "I can take my Tigers out to the right flank. If the Yankees give us any trouble, we'll hold 'em while the rest of the brigade comes up."

"Good idea, Major," Taylor nodded. "Captain Moore, I would appreciate it if you would assemble that portion of your command which is still capable of combat, take your men up the ridge, and deploy in column there. I want you to watch our left flank and keep up a steady fire on the Yankees up there."

"Yes, sir!"

"Gentlemen, impress upon your men—the Coaling must be taken or the day is lost!"

Several of Wheat's Tigers, a corporal followed by a few privates, pushed and tore their way through the dense brush on the ridge overlooking the ravine. The sounds of the battle down below in the fields were punctuated by the closer reports of the Union battery firing from the Coaling.

“We’re gonna hafta git down on our knees and crawl,” the corporal said.

“Gen’l Taylor says Gen’l Jackson must have those guns,” one of the privates said. “Let’s we-all chip in and buy them thar guns for Ol’ Jack.”

The soldiers crawled one by one into the brush.

Captain Carrington led his battery toward the front line, the noise of the battle growing louder as the horses carried the men and guns forward. They passed limping and groaning wounded who were making their way to the rear. A shell exploded close by.

“Hurry up! Get up there! They are cutting us to pieces!”

Carrington and his men hurried by, concerned and fearful looks on their faces. One of the men riding on a caisson leaned over and threw up. Another mounted on one of the battery horses had messed his pants when the shell exploded close by.

Winder was afoot and reforming his lines when Carrington trotted up at the head of his battery.

“General Winder—!” Carrington shouted. Incoming fire from the Coaling exploded nearby and drowned out the rest of what he said.

Winder looked up and saw the fresh battery and saw Carrington's mouth moving and saw the rank on his collar. "Captain! You are just in time! Take your battery up along to the left of the line here and give me some flanking support! Hurry to the front, Captain, there is not a moment to spare!"

"Yes, sir!" Carrington saluted and turned to his battery, shouting orders that were almost inaudible in the noise. He and his men and their horses and guns made for the left flank as fast as they could go. As soon as they arrived at the position Winder had indicated they found themselves under intense and close Union fire from in front of them, across a shallow run. Before they even had their pieces unlimbered, the battery's first sergeant had his head blasted open, fragments of his skull skiddering across the top of a caisson. More Confederates, and their battery horses, too, began falling as they brought their cannons into action.

Winder, his sword in hand, stalked the reformed line in front of his men, the few hundred now remaining of the Stonewall Brigade. "We are going in, boys! We cannot stay here and we cannot go back! We shall move forward, drive the enemy from his position, and carry his battery at the point of the bayonet!" His raised his sword point-up over his head. "Forward!" He

and his men began jogging forward, his men breaking into the chilling scream of the Rebel yell. They crossed through the same run that farther to their left ran in front of Carrington's battery. They splashed through the shallow water and up the bank. At the top of the bank they were hit by a volley fired by Federals hidden in a wheatfield. Several of the Confederates were hit and fell and some of the others dropped quickly to the ground and took cover, and began returning fire. Those still standing continued with Winder through an apple orchard and then into the wheatfield. Across the field was the line of Union infantry. Behind them was their colonel, on horseback and waving his hat and cheering his men.

"Shoot that man!" Winder called to his own nearby soldiers. "Shoot that Yankee bastard!"

"Yes, sir," one of the Confederate riflemen said and raised his musket to his shoulder and took careful aim and fired. The Union colonel fell from his horse. "Got 'im, General."

"Good shooting, soldier!" Winder said.

"Thank you, sir. But I am afraid that was my last round. My cartridge box is empty."

"Mine too, General!" said another soldier. "I just fired my last one!"

Winder looked around at the other soldiers in the line near him and saw that several had stopped firing. To the two who had told him they were out of cartridges, he said, “You men hightail it back to the brigade wagons and get us some ammunition!”

A short distance behind the lines, a young Confederate soldier tried to free his ammunition wagon from a deep muddy swale. A slave dressed in little more than filthy rags helped him but the wagon was heavily loaded and one of its two mules had been killed. The wagon was stuck. The two soldiers Winder had dispatched ran up.

“Help me get my wagon out!” the young soldier said. The other two ignored him and began tearing the tops off ammunition cases and stuffing cartridges into their pockets.

“I said help me get my wagon out!” the boy screamed. He was fifteen years old. He grabbed his whip and lashed at the two infantrymen.

“You shit-ass little bastard!” One of the others grabbed the whip and pulled the teamster down into the mud. “I’ll teach you a little respect!” The soldier clubbed the boy three times with his musket and left him face-down in the muddy water while he and his companion finished filling their pockets. They both hoisted a case of ammo apiece onto their shoulders and, still

carrying their muskets, headed back to the front line. The slave dragged the boy out of the mud and rolled him over on his back to see if he was still alive.

The two soldiers returned to the line where Winder was rallying the men, some of whom looked as though they were about to break and run to the rear. One of these was an officer on Winder's staff, a skinny captain with a thin beard. He carried a pistol he did not seem prepared to use. The ammo bearers crouched low and scooted along, trying to avoid being hit by any of the Minié balls whizzing by. A shell exploded nearby and forced the ammo bearers and the staff officer closer to the ground.

"Here's your powder and balls, boys!" one of the ammo bearers called. Winder turned and saw them, and to the cowering captain he said, "Get up! Give them a hand with those cartridges!"

The captain holstered his pistol and joined the two soldiers in running along the line, handing out cartridges to the riflemen. Winder raised his sword over his head. "Load up, boys, and follow me!"

Again the Confederates howled their bloodcurdling yell and again they ran into a devastating fire from the Union muskets and cannon. A battery horse was hit by a cannonball and neighed as it fell to the ground and died. Eight or nine Confederates huddled in a clump in the run as Minié balls,

Napoleon solid shot, and Parrot rifle shells buzzed and howled overhead. A shell burst among them and killed or wounded them all.

A few Confederate soldiers took up position around the prosperous farmhouse that had been evacuated at the start of the battle. The front door of the house was open and several of the Confederates ducked inside. They took up positions at the windows and opened fire on the Yankees advancing across the wheatfield to their front. The Yankees returned fire and their Minié balls thudded into the farmhouse walls. One of the Confederates was hit and howling.

"No no no!" He fell thrashing to the farmhouse floor.

Poague's Parrots were back on the line now and being furiously served by skeleton crews keeping up a rapid fire. The gunners were soaked in sweat and splattered with blood and guts and bits of flesh and blackened and grimed with gunpowder. Out on the left flank one of Carrington's crews loaded their Napoleon with canister and fired. Five Yanks went down together when the canister hit their line.

One regiment of the Stonewall Brigade reached a rail fence crossing the battlefield. They stopped to take cover and fired and loaded and fired again at a feverish pace. They shouted to each other but none could be heard over the tremendous din. Winder was with them, just to their rear, when

Hutchins galloped up on horseback, leaning as far over as he could, his face as pale as milk. He shouted something to General Winder and rode off to the rear again as quickly as he could, whipping and spurring his horse in a panicked furor.

The Confederates stayed at the fence for what seemed to them an eternity. For those who were killed there it may as well have been. A few of the survivors began pulling back under the withering Union fire, then more and more followed until the entire Confederate line was retreating, Winder with them. Across the battlefield in front of them a Union colonel led his men in a cheer.

"They're breaking, boys! Hip-hip!"

"Hurrah!" the soldiers roared in response.

"Now, load, charge bayonets and at them!"

The Federals charged and the Confederate line broke as its members ran for their lives, Winder last of all. The Union line stopped at the fence and the soldiers fired and reloaded and remained there, firing again. Some dropped to lie prone and use the bodies of the dead and wounded Confederates who lay along the fence for cover. One wounded Confederate raised an arm in protest and the Yank in front of him clubbed him with his musket again and again.

“Lay still, you damn Secesh!”

Taylor stood behind his line of men in the brushy woods along the ridge overlooking the Coaling. One of his lieutenants pushed through the underbrush from the far end of the line.

“We’re all ready, General!”

Taylor nodded and looked up and down the line of men half-hidden in the woods.

“Very well, then.” He drew his sword and raised it over his head. “Brigade!” he bellowed. He quickly looked again from one end of the line to the other. “Charge!”

The thousand men of the Louisiana Brigade charged wildly down the ravine, giving the Rebel yell. The Union gunners on the Coaling were startled to see this howling mass of butternut-clad soldiers coming at them and scrambled to manhandle their cannon around to fire at Taylor’s men. In the woods above and east of the Coaling, Union skirmishers fired on the Confederates passing obliquely in front of them. In turn, further up the ridge, Moore’s company opened fire on the skirmishers.

“Give it to ‘em steady, boys!” Moore called out. “Take it nice and easy! Pick your targets! Aim low! Aim low!”

The screaming Confederates ran down the slope through the bottom of the ravine and scrambled back up to where the Yankees were frantically repositioning their cannon and loading them with bags of powder and rounds of canister. Some Rebels were picked off by the Union skirmishers who were themselves being picked off by Moore's men. As the rest of the Louisiana Brigade reached the lip of the Coaling, the Yanks fired their cannon at point-blank range. The canister cut great swathes through the Confederate ranks.

One of Wheat's Tigers with a bayonet affixed to his musket stopped in front of one of the Union cannon, its gunner standing alongside it with the lanyard in his hand.

"You damn Yankee! Give up! This is my gun!"

The Yankee jerked the lanyard. The canister round obliterated the chest of the Rebel and blasted what was left of him back down the slope. But there were too many more Tigers and before the dead one's body had stopped tumbling down the slope the Union gunner had been bayoneted by at least two of them and fell dead by the wheel of his gun.

Major Wheat, whose large figure stood out in the melee, raised his sword high.

"Come on, boys! Let's give' em a taste of Louisiana!"

The Union artillery fire was devastating but still the Confederates came through the smoke and the din and over the broken bodies and slippery pools of bloody mud. Then the Confederates were upon the battery and the Union gunners could no longer fire their cannons but had to defend them hand-to-hand. The soldiers fought each other with swords, sabers, knives, bayonets, rifles, pistols, artillery handspikes, ramrods, musical instruments used as clubs—anything that could be brought to hand, including rocks. Men fought with their fists, they gouged and they bit. A Federal ear was torn off in the mouth of a wild-eyed Tiger in flouncy Zouave dress.

The soldiers cheered and shouted and shrieked and groaned and howled. Gunfire popped from the troops still in the woods. General Taylor and Major Wheat bellowed like bulls as they slashed around with their swords.

"Die, you goddamned Yankee sons-a-bitches!" Wheat roared.

And die they did, until the last of the Union gunners was overpowered. Dead and wounded men and horses lay thickly all about the Coaling. One cannon had a dead Federal on his knees at its muzzle, one arm over its barrel and his other hand on the shell he had been about to load. Another Federal sprawled dead across the cannon's gunsight, while a third lay face-down alongside with a broken ramrod in his hands. Sporadic gunfire still came

from the Union skirmishers further up the ridge, but the battery was captured. The Confederates sent up a great yell that was heard all across the battlefield.

Tom rode his horse at a canter to join Jackson, Pendelton, and Douglas where they, also mounted, had posted themselves not far behind the line of battle. A howling cannonball tore a gash in the ground underneath Pendelton's horse, but neither the horse not the lieutenant seemed to notice. Just as Tom arrived, a tremendous Confederate yell could be heard over the other noise of the battle, coming from the direction of the Coaling.

Douglas was the first to notice Tom. He saw that Tom's face was dirty and the dirt appeared to be tear-streaked. The stunned look in Tom's eyes was one Douglas had seen before.

"Tom! What's the matter?"

Tom did not seem to hear Douglas and he reported to Jackson, giving the general a distracted salute.

"Sir. Sir. General Taylor wishes me to inform you that his brigade. His brigade is in position. The noises coming from the Coaling are of his attack. I do not know. I do not know how it fares."

Tom broke down into shuddering crying.

"Soldier! Soldier!" Pendelton snapped. "Behave like a man, or by God, I swear I shall strike you with the flat of my sword!"

"Lieutenant!" Jackson said. "Do not take our Lord's name in vain!"

"I am sorry, sir."

"Buck up, Tom," Douglas said. "I know battle is hard. We see and hear terrible things."

"It's my brother. He has been shot and lies badly wounded near the Coaling."

"He shall be all right, soldier," Jackson said. "He shall be all right."

Tom wanted to believe this. He wasn't sure if it was so, but he was certain he was not going to argue it with the General Commanding. General Ewell came riding up, leading a column of infantry.

"General," he saluted Jackson, "I brung you some Alabama boys!"

"Much obliged, General Ewell," Jackson returned the salute. "My Virginians find themselves in need of some assistance. They are falling back all along the line. Please have your regiments move forward. Mister Douglas, please guide the Alabama regiments."

"Yes, sir!" Douglas rode off to guide Ewell's Alabama boys into line. Ewell remained behind.

"General," Jackson said, "how soon will your Georgians be up?"

"They shall arrive on the field momentarily, General!"

Jackson pointed out over the noisy, smoky battlefield. "Look at what Shields does. He has pushed Winder back, but he has then stopped. He is taking troops on his left and turning them back to support the Coaling, where the Union guns are silent. Your Alabama boys will prove sufficient to hold the line in front of us. I wish you to take your Georgians around to our right, to support Taylor."

"Yes, sir! Have you anyone who can serve as my guide?"

"Yes. Private Rose, please show General Ewell the way. Once you have done so, attach yourself to Captain Moore's company for the remainder of the battle and assist him in any way you are able."

"Yes, sir!" Tom saluted. "Thank you, sir!"

General Taylor, his bloody sword in hand, surveyed all about him the shambles the Coaling had become. His attention was caught by the low sound of a Union cheer, so different from the high-pitched keening wail of the Confederates, coming from the battlefield below the Coaling. He looked up to see two Union regiments turning back from their push against the Stonewall Brigade. They redeployed in perfect order while under heavy Confederate

fire. Major Wheat came and stood by Taylor and they watched the Union maneuver.

"Major, soldiers who can maneuver like that under heavy fire will not be easily defeated."

"Indeed, sir. We should kill the remaining battery horses. If the Yankees should retake this hill, we don't want them hauling their guns off."

"Major, you are right. See to it, please."

Wheat turned to the soldiers on the Coaling. "Kill the horses! Shoot the battery horses!" He unholstered his pistol and shot the nearest standing horse in the head. Other soldiers began shooting the other surviving battery horses. Most of the soldiers weren't paying attention to Taylor and Wheat. They were whooping in celebration amid the groans and cries of the wounded and the bullets still whizzing by from Federals farther up the ridge. Taylor charged among his men, trying to get them organized to meet the Union counterattack he had seen coming.

"Goddamn you scurvy bastards, get in line! Get in line! Form line of battle!"

Some of the men heard him and began lining up but they were badly disorganized. Most of them didn't see the Federals advancing on them at the double-quick. When the first volley slammed into the Louisianans the

soldiers who had paid attention to Taylor were still reloading their muskets. The volley broke the Confederates and they fled the Coaling, down into the ravine and back up the wooded ridge. A few, led by Taylor and Wheat, fought a hasty rear-guard action and fell back in front of the charging and cheering Yanks. As soon as the Rebels were back up the ridge their commanders hurried the get them organized.

"Form up! Form up! Form a line! Load and cap your muskets! Fire! Fire!"

Even though the Louisiana troops were veterans they were rattled by the sudden Union assault. Some stood and tried to get in line and begin shooting but their fire was ragged and barely enough to stop the advancing Federal line.

"Steady boys, steady!" Taylor called. "We shall show them what Southern manhood is all about! There is nothing left for us to do but set our backs against this mountain and die hard!"

Farther to the right along the ridge Captain Moore and his handful of men divided their fire between the Yanks to their front and those now swarming onto the Coaling.

"Go to it, boys! Go to it!"

General Ewell, cap in one hand and sword in the other, charged out of the brush behind Taylor's men. Tom was with him and right behind them was the head of Ewell's column.

"General Taylor!" Ewell waved his cap in the air. "The Georgians are here!" To the Louisianans he said, "Men, you all know me! We must go back to that battery!"

The Louisiana troops gave a Rebel yell and the Georgians joined in. They did not await further orders, and charged back down the ravine, screaming their bloodcurdling yell. Tom was caught up in their fury and charged with them. Ewell waved his sword over his head as the soldiers charged by.

"Goddamned son-of-a-bitch Yankees! Kill those fucking bluebellied bastards! Rip their goddamned throats out!"

The Federals who had just retaken the Coaling and were themselves disorganized by their charge were stunned by the ferocity and weight of the Confederate counterattack. Even the drummer-boys were attacking. The Union line crumpled and dissolved and the fighting on the Coaling again became a vicious disordered free-for-all. A Union soldier cowered under one of the caissons while the battle swirled around him. His sergeant pointed a musket at his head.

"Come out from under there and do your duty and you'll have some chance of your life! But if you stay there, by God I'll blow your brains out!"

Before the soldier had a chance to decide, Wheat was behind the sergeant and decapitated him with one two-handed stroke of his sword. The soldier under the caisson smiled a hesitant and trembling smile at Wheat, who drove his sword into the young man's belly and out through his back.

Tom fired his pistol among the confused fighting. When his gun was empty he turned it around to use as a club. Screaming in rage and sorrow and fear, he jumped onto the back of a Yankee and clubbed him repeatedly with the butt of his gun. He beat his man to the ground, falling heavily on top of him and continuing to scream and pound on the man's head. He didn't stop to see he had cracked the man's skull open. He scrambled to his feet, tears running down his cheeks, and kicked the man several times. He cast about him for some new weapon and picked up a bloody musket with its bayonet still affixed. He raised it up to stab the immobile and almost certainly dead Yank, then he stopped, bent over and panting. He looked around to see that his fellow Confederates had killed or captured every Union soldier remaining on the Coaling. Most of the Confederates who were not themselves killed or wounded charged in a great yelling mob down the slopes of the Coaling, headed straight into the flank of the Union lines still battling the Stonewall

Brigade and their Alabamian reinforcements. Tom dropped the musket and sat down on the blood-soaked ground, a blank look in his eyes.

Down on the battlefield that stretched nearly a mile from the Coaling to the South Fork of the Shenandoah, the Union line wavered. Some of the Federals ran from the howling mob of Confederates coming from the Coaling, while others who were further away more calmly turned and walked to the rear. As the line continued disintegrating, more and more of the walking Yanks began to run, ignoring their officers' attempts to slow them and keep them together in an orderly retreat.

Captain Poague, sweaty, filthy and exhausted, directed the fire of his two Parrots and one of his smoothbores at the Yankees still to his front. Another smoothbore stood silent near the first. There were no men to serve it. Around and among the battery the ground was littered with dead and wounded horses and men.

"We've got 'em now, boys!" Poague yelled. "We've got 'em now! Pour it into 'em!"

One of Poague's gunners swayed by the active smoothbore, barely able to keep on his feet. "I just cain't do this no more today. I have got to get me some sleep." The gunner fell down in a dead faint near the muzzle of his cannon, oblivious to its roar.

By now the Union line had completely collapsed, the soldiers crowding the road leading into the woods at the northern edge of the battlefield. Confederate cannon and musket fire tore into the backs of the panicking Union troops, some of whom broke away from the stampede on the road and tried sprinting across the fields to reach the woods. Some made it and some didn't.

Confederates manned the captured Union cannon on the Coaling, turning them around to fire on the retreating Federals. They didn't pay Tom any mind as he crossed the ravine and climbed back up the wooded ridge. He saw Henry lying in the brush, eyes closed and deathly pale. Tom couldn't tell if his brother was still alive. The blood on the bandage on Henry's arm was dark and partly dried.

"Henry! Henry!"

There was no response. Tom dropped to his knees and pressed his ear to Henry's chest. There was too much battle noise to hear a heartbeat, but Henry was still warm.

"Henry, it's Tom!" Tom made to shake Henry but thought better of it. "Henry, wake up! It's your brother, Tom!"

Henry stirred and his eyes slowly opened.

"Tom?" he said weakly, almost in a whisper. Then more strongly, "Tommy . . . hi, Tommy, I'm glad you came back. I want to go home. Could you please take me home?"

"Yes, Henry. Yes, I can. Here," Tom pulled Henry up. "Here, let's get you on your feet. You're too big for me to carry you. My horse is down the trail a little ways. I'll help you to it and then you can ride down to see the doctor. I'll go with you."

Tom took Henry's good arm around his shoulder and helped hold him up as the two brothers walked slowly down the trail.

"Tommy, I can't feel my right hand. And my arm hurts real bad."

"Henry, you got yourself a nasty wound. I won't kid you about that."

"A nasty wound. D'ya think I'm gonna lose my arm?"

"I don't know, Henry. I don't know."

"Oh, Tommy, don't let them take my arm. Please don't let them take my arm."

"Henry, now, I don't know what the doctor is going to want to do with you, but whatever it is I'm sure it will be for the best."

"Will it be Doctor McGuire? You take me to Doctor McGuire?"

"If we can find him. But I'm taking you to the first doctor we can find."

"I don' wanna lose my arm."

"You won't lose your arm. You might lose your hand. I won't lie to you about that. If you do lose it, you'll just have to learn to write with the other one."

"Yes. Write with the other one." Henry's voice was weakening and Tom felt him grow heavier. "Use a sword, too. Bet I could learn how to do that. How to use a sword with my other."

"I bet you could, big brother. I bet you could."

General Ewell remained on the Coaling and worked as a gunner on one of the captured Parrots. One of his eyes was swollen shut and his whiskers were badly singed and he had a lunatic grin. He saw General Jackson riding up the slope alone and into the Coaling. Ewell left off with his gunnery and approached his commander, slipping and sloshing in the morass of blood and body parts.

"General!" he saluted. "May I present you one captured Yankee battery!"

Jackson returned his salute. The fierce blue light shone in his eyes. "Thank you, General! God has blessed us with a signal victory today!"

Jackson remained on the Coaling for a few minutes, watching the gunners at work and studying the battlefield where his men were pursuing

the broken Yanks. He had about him the serene intensity of a man who had once again been vindicated by his faith.

A loose column of defeated Federals, many of them with faces blackened by gunpowder streaked with sweat and some of them spattered with blood and their uniforms dirty or torn, trudged up the road between the river to their left and the low ridges to their right, the sounds of battle diminishing in the distance behind them. Two teenaged girls stood by the road next to the gate on the path that led back to their whitewashed farmhouse. On the ground between them sat a bucket of water. They offered cupfuls to the passing soldiers. A Union captain stopped.

"I thought you girls despised us! Why are you giving us water?"

"We do despise you, Captain," one girl said and handed a tin cup of water to a soldier. He took it and gulped it down. The other girl dipped her own tin cup in the bucket and offered it to the captain.

"But if Brother was in the battle and was wounded," she said, "or was as tired and thirsty as all these men are, wouldn't it be nice if some Union folks would give him water to drink?"

The captain took the water and nodded his thanks and drank.

Jackson, an outsized figure on his small horse, slowly rode across the battlefield among the dead and wounded and the ambulance wagons. He was alone, his head bowed and one arm stretched overhead, index finger pointing up to the heavens.

Tom led his horse across the battlefield. Henry was in the saddle and leaning down over the neck, half passed-out.

"Tommy, how much further to the doctor's house?" Henry's voice was weak.

"Just a little ways, Henry. Just a little ways."

They passed a Union corpse, the soldier's head shot off by a cannonball and a few inches of spinal column sticking up between the shoulders. Near it was the corpse of a Confederate, lying on his back and his eyes and mouth opened in what looked like surprise. Tom heard a gunshot and looked to see a Confederate officer putting down a wounded horse.

Near the river was the house that had been evacuated right before the battle. It was noticeably shot-up from having been used by the Confederates as a strongpoint. Dr. McGuire had taken it over for a field hospital and a large square yellow flag flew over it. There was much activity in the yard. Doctors and orderlies hurried about and the yard was full of wounded men. There

were shouts of orders and cries of pain. A large and growing pile of bloody and mangled arms and legs lay just outside one of the windows. Through the window came an agonizing scream.

Tom and Henry approached the house. Henry was about to slip off the horse's neck and fall out of the saddle. Dr. McGuire was in the yard, supervising, his jacket off and his sleeves rolled up and his hands and arms streaked with blood up to his elbows. Tom saw him.

"Doctor McGuire!"

McGuire looked and saw Tom trying to help Henry down from the horse. McGuire called, "Orderly!" and rushed to help. Henry was pale as death and groaned in pain as McGuire and Tom helped him down.

"A stretcher!" McGuire said to the orderly. "Get me a stretcher!"

"We ain't got none, doctor! They's all filled up!"

"Then get a plank or a blanket! Something we can lay him on!"

The orderly scrambled to find a blanket. In the chaos of the yard he found one mudded and bloody and laid it out on the ground by Henry.

"Okay, Thomas," McGuire said, "let's lay him down and have a look at him."

Tom and the doctor laid Henry down on the blanket. The orderly stood by. McGuire carefully unwrapped the bloody rag of a bandage from Henry's shattered arm. Henry's eyes were closed and he yelped in pain.

"How bad is it, doctor?"

"It's pretty bad, Thomas," McGuire said with the flat tone of a man who had seen a lot of pretty bad that day and not for the first time.

Henry opened his eyes though they didn't seem to focus. "Doctor . . . "

"It's all right, Henry. I'm right here."

"Take care of my men, doctor . . . take care of Elijah . . . "

"We're taking care of everyone, Henry." To Tom and the orderly McGuire said, "Let's get him inside."

Tom and the orderly lifted Henry up in the blanket and carried him to the house. Tom had never heard and never could have imagined the devil's chorus of moans and cries and screams and groans and calls and crying and babbling he heard as McGuire led them across the yard.

"Can you save him?" he asked McGuire.

"I do not know. I shall have to remove his arm below the wound. It's as good as dead already. We must take it off right away or he will get gangrene and he will die."

"Doctor, is there no other way?"

"Not one that I know of," McGuire looked at Tom. "And I could use your help, if you think you're up for it."

"How can I help?"

"Stay with me and I'll tell you."

The interior of the farmhouse was a shambles. There were pockmarks in the walls from the firefight that had happened here and half the parlor wall had been knocked down by shellfire. Wounded men in various conditions lay and sat around and were tended by orderlies. It seemed to Tom that whatever in the house wasn't splattered with blood was drenched with blood, and the cries and groans and shouts were even louder inside than they had been in the yard.

In the middle of the parlor was a door laid across two sawhorses.

"Lay him down there," McGuire said to Tom and the one orderly, then to two more orderlies in the room, "You two come assist. Stand at his feet."

The two orderlies, their uniforms spattered, splattered, and in places soaked in blood and gore, took their places.

"Tom, you and— I'm sorry, I do not know your name," McGuire said to the other orderly.

"Private Jenkins, sir."

"You two stand at his head. Tom, you stand on his left side. Jenkins, roll a rag up and stuff it in his mouth so he doesn't bite his tongue off from the pain."

Jenkins grabbed from the sideboard a rag that looked like it had been torn from a tablecloth. He began rolling it up.

"Hurry!" McGuire said.

Jenkins hurried. He stuffed the rolled-up rag into Henry's mouth. Henry's eyes were closed and he groaned. McGuire picked up a bone saw from the sideboard and nodded to the orderlies at Henry's feet.

"All right, you men know what to do. Grab his ankles and hold him down. Tom, Jenkins—you two grab his shoulders and his arms and hold him down. Put your weight into it! We cannot have him thrashing about!"

McGuire raised his bone saw.

"All right, gentlemen, let us begin."

Tom leaned over and hard onto Henry and did not take his eyes off his brother's face while McGuire amputated Henry's wounded arm. Henry writhed in pain but was well held-down. A low, guttural scream came from his throat, muffled by the rag stuffed in his mouth. His eyes did not open. Tom's did not close. A part of his mind that seemed new and distant from the child he had been that morning took note that now, here in this abattoir,

holding his screaming brother down while an old family friend sawed off his brother's arm, he may as well have been as hard and unfeeling as the hills they had fought over.

## Chapter 4

Henry lay on his back in a broad bed in a room in Madison Hall. It was night and a few candles burned in the room. He was covered up to his neck with a thin quilt and was asleep. Even in the dim candlelight his face was pale and it was drawn and beaded with sweat.

Tom slept sitting in a padded rocking chair in one corner of the room. He was still in his dirty, torn, and blood-stained uniform, but his hands and face were clean.

Closer to the bed was an empty Windsor chair. Becky was on her knees by the bed, her hands together in prayer. Her eyes were closed but tears had run down her cheeks.

Tom woke up and opened his eyes. He sat still for a few moments, then quietly said, “It’s a noble thing he did for our cause.” As he was saying this he heard how empty it sounded to him and knew he didn’t believe it the

way he might have believed it just a day ago. If a day could last thirty years, this day had.

Becky still kneeled with her hands pressed together. She opened her eyes and looked at Henry.

"I hope our cause is truly noble." She relaxed her hands and wiped her tears away. Still watching Henry, she got up and sat in the empty chair.

Tom wanted to say something to this but didn't right away. He didn't know what he wanted to say except that he wanted to say everything and all at once. He wanted to tell her, or if not her then someone—anyone—everyone—all he had seen and done and thought and felt that day. He didn't know how or if he would ever know how to talk about any part of it.

"Do you doubt that our cause is noble?" Tom's voice was flat. He was very tired.

"Oh, Tom, I don't know," Becky said, turning to look at him. "I sometimes do have my doubts." She was quiet for a moment, then, "I know what you're thinking. You're thinking I'm a silly goose who couldn't possibly understand anything."

"I am not thinking that, Becky. I have known you all my life and I have never thought that."

"I know what we're fighting for," Becky's voice was low. She didn't want to disturb Henry and it was late, she didn't want to wake anyone else in the house. "I know it's our right to live as we please and to form whatever government suits us best, and that the Yankees have no business coming down here and trying to force us to stay in their nation when we desire to establish our own. But I also know that what's at the heart of us living as we please is that we reserve the right to make other people into slaves if we want, just because they look so different from us."

"But it's more than that, Becky," Tom closed his eyes. "They *are* different. Very different. The Negroes were made to be servile. It's just their nature."

"Thomas Rose, how could you possibly know that? The only Negroes you have ever known were slaves. You couldn't possibly know what their nature is, what their true nature would be if they had never been made slaves. For all you know, they're capable of the same things we are, maybe even more."

Tom was quiet but he wasn't asleep.

"You know, Tom," Becky continued, "my daddy freed all his slaves when he died. It was in his will. My mama offered to hire any who wanted to stay and work the farm. Most of them did and they worked every bit as good

as they did when they were slaves. One of them, Naphtali Johnson, left to set up as a blacksmith in Front Royal. He was doing right well before the war broke out."

"Well . . . that still don't give the Yankees the right to come down here and force us to change to suit them."

"But what if we are wrong, Tom? All the sacrifices we are making—all the glorious gallantry and the noble blood shed—what if we are wrong?"

Tim didn't answer. Both he and Becky were quiet now. He was slipping back into sleep when she said, "So when do you leave? In the morning?"

Tom opened his eyes. "Hmm? Yes. In the morning. General Jackson was kind enough to allow me to remain here tonight, but I am to rejoin the army tomorrow at Brown's Gap."

Henry stirred in his sleep and softly moaned. Becky watched him.

"My poor Henry."

"You're sweet on him."

"Nonsense," Becky said, still watching Henry. "He is my cousin. And since he is my cousin he is staying right here at Madison Hall until he is well enough to leave. I will take care of him. I have worked in those army

hospitals and I shall not have him sent to one of those. They are full of fever and pestilence that kill more soldiers than all the Yankee bullets ever could."

"And if that wasn't bad enough, now the Yankees are shooting at the hospitals."

Becky looked sharply at Tom.

"They are doing what?"

"You didn't hear?" Tom's voice was low and level. "Frémont's army came up to the bluff across the river not long after the battle was over. They deployed their batteries and shelled the battlefield and one of the hospitals. Not the one we were in. One that was further up the valley. They also shelled some of the ambulances and the wounded who were still on the battlefield. Old Jack ordered Doctor McGuire to get our wounded out and leave the Yankees. Said Frémont could shell his own wounded if he wanted to shell something so bad."

"What a miserable low-down scoundrel, that Frémont!" Becky hissed. "I do believe I would shoot him myself if I had a gun!"

"I do believe you would, Rebecca Johnson."

In a while the candles were snuffed. The lamp remained lit, its wick low. Henry slept through the night on his back in the middle of the bed underneath the light quilt. On one side of him on top of the quilt slept his

brother, still fully-uniformed and booted and turned toward him. On the other side slept his cousin, also fully-clothed and also on top of the quilt, with her hand resting lightly on his shoulder.

## Chapter 5

The sun was up but it was still early. Tom was on horseback out front of Madison Hall, preparing to leave. His uniform was still stained with blood but was not as dirty as it had been the night before, and its tears had been quickly mended. Becky hurried out the front door and down the porch steps. She carried a picnic basket.

"Tom! Wait, I have some things for you!"

"Oh, Becky, you shouldn't have. I wouldn't want you to go to any more trouble for me."

"Nonsense, it's no trouble at all. What sort of person would I have to be just to let you ride off without even a fare-ye-well?" She handed him up the basket. "There's biscuits and butter, and some cold chicken, and some of my mama's peach preserves that we saved from those . . . Germans."

Tom tipped his hat, "Why, thank you kindly, cousin." He balanced the basket across the pommel of his saddle.

"Don't worry about Henry, Tom. I'll take real good care of him."

"I know you will, Becky." Tom paused and thought to say something more but wasn't sure what it should be. "Well, I must go now." He turned his horse and rode across the yard toward the Brown's Gap Road.

"You take care of yourself!" Becky called after him.

The War Between the Union and the Confederacy lasted three more years. By the time the two sides finished fighting, their war had killed over six hundred thousand soldiers, one out of every seven Yankees who served and one out of every four Rebels. Nobody knows how many civilians died in the war. It was likely fewer than a quarter-million. Civilians were not generally targeted by the armies in this war. The Confederacy—The South—was devastated, though, and many of its people were made homeless or even refugees, some of whom died of starvation or disease.

The Army of the Valley sent its captured supplies south to Lee's Army of Northern Virginia and rested for a couple weeks before joining that army in its fight to push the Union invaders back from the Confederate capital at Richmond. They saw much hard fighting and lost many men, good, bad, and indifferent. After that came more marching and more fighting, month after

month as the months turned into years and as more and more men were wounded or killed.

Major Wheat died in battle, shot with a Minié ball through the head at Gaines's Mill just eighteen days after he helped lead the charge that captured the Coaling. General Winder was mortally wounded six weeks later at Cedar Mountain when he was struck by a Union cannon shell. Three weeks after that, Baldy Ewell's left leg was shattered by a Minié ball at Second Manassas. The leg had to be amputated and he was out of action for ten months. When he returned to duty he had lost his boldness as a field officer. Later in the war his health broke and he was assigned to command the Richmond garrison. This was no reprieve as Richmond was soon on the front line. He survived the war and lived for several years after as a gentleman farmer before dying of pneumonia just shy of his fifty-fifth birthday.

Stonewall Jackson was mortally wounded in the spring of 1863 at Chancellorsville, on the day of his greatest victory. He was returning that evening from a reconnaissance with members of his staff when they were fired on by Confederate soldiers who mistook them in the dusk for Union cavalry. He was struck by three Minié balls, two of them in his left arm, which had to be amputated. Dr. McGuire performed the surgery. All went as well as could be expected with this at first, but the general came down with

pneumonia and a week later he died. Dr. McGuire reported that Jackson's last words were, "Let us cross over the river, and rest under the shade of the trees."

Kyd Douglas, Hunter McGuire, Samuel Moore, Robert Dabney, William Poague, James Carrington, and Richard Taylor all survived the war and even prospered later after some time had passed. Sandie Pendelton didn't make it, though. He remained with Jackson and Jackson's successors until the final Valley campaign in the autumn of 1864, when he was mortally wounded at Fisher's Hill. He died five days before his twenty-fourth birthday. He had been married less than a year and his widow gave birth to their son a month after he died. The boy didn't make it to his first birthday and died of diphtheria about a year after his father had been killed.

There is no record of what happened to Hutchins, Private Jenkins, or Billy the coosh-cooker. General Frémont proved sufficiently incompetent to be removed from command a few weeks after Port Republic. General Shields had had an equally difficult time in the campaign against Jackson's Army of the Valley, and he resigned his commission. He had served in the United States Senate before the war and served there again shortly before he died.

Henry Rose survived his wounding and a subsequent promotion to captain. He returned to field duty as a company commander in the Stonewall

Brigade. He never learned to write very well with his left hand but he did learn to wield a sword with it. As the war went on and men were killed, he was eventually promoted to lieutenant colonel in command of a regiment that had been so decimated it was only a shadow of what it had once been. After the war, he helped his cousin Rebecca Johnson run a home for wounded Valley veterans. They were an inseparable couple though they never married, and of course they had no children. They both lived until shortly after the turn of the century. They never saw an airplane, but they did see a few motorcars.

Tom Rose was promoted to lieutenant and remained on Jackson's staff until the general was killed. When the late general's corps was divided in two and General Ewell took command of one half, Tom served on Ewell's staff. He was with Old Baldy until the end and was captured along with Ewell and the rest of his command at Sayler's Creek. This was the defeat that caused General Lee to exclaim, "My God, is the army dissolved?" Three days later Lee surrendered to General Grant at Appomattox Court House, and soon after that, the war was over. Tom was held as a prisoner of war until that summer. After his release he did as many Confederate war veterans did and he headed west. He is known to have been proprietor of an import business in San

Francisco that was still active in 1906, but after the Great Earthquake and Fire there in April of that year, he vanishes from the historical record.

THE END